

MAR 12 1962

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES

VOL. 10, NO. 4, DECEMBER, 1961
(SPECIAL NUMBER)

CARIBBEAN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Edited by
Sidney W. Mintz and William Davenport

W. Davenport	386	Introduction
C. E. Cumper	386	Household and Occupation in Barbados
W. Davenport	420	The Family System of Jamaica
M. G. Smith	455	Kinship and Household in Carriacou
Rémy Bastien	478	Haitian Rural Family Organization
Peter J. Wilson	511	Household and Family on Providencia
Sidney W. Mintz	528	A Final Note

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE WEST INDIES, JAMAICA, W.I.

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE WEST INDIES

Editorial Advisory Board

- Prof. R. G. D. Allen, London School of Economics, London University.
Prof. K. E. Boulding, University of Michigan.
Prof. R. W. Firth, London School of Economics, London University.
Prof. P. Sargant Florence, C.B.E., Birmingham University.
Prof. M. Fortes, Cambridge University.
Prof. D. V. Glass, London School of Economics, London University.
Prof. H. M. Gluckman, Manchester University.
Prof. Robert Merton, Columbia University.
Prof. E. F. Nash, University of Wales.
Prof. Talcott Parsons, Harvard University.
Prof. K. E. Robinson, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London University.
Prof. Margaret Read.
Mr. D. G. Seers, United Nations.
Prof. J. Tinbergen, Netherlands Institute of Economics, Holland.

Editor

H. D. Huggins

Associate Editor

Mary Manning Carley

Research Staff and Associates

Director: H. D. Huggins

G. C. Abbott
R. J. Benewick
Lloyd Best
E. R. Chang
K. J. Crowther
G. E. Eaton
O. J. C. Francis

J. B. Kelly
A. Kundu
Ione Marshall
C. O'Loughlin
W. A. Singham
C. Y. Thomas
R. D. C. Thomas

K. V. Woolmer

PREFACE

This special number of *SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES*, subtitled "Working Papers in Caribbean Social Organization," has been prepared under the guest co-editorship of Professors Sidney W. Mintz and William H. Davenport of the Department of Anthropology, Yale University. It is, among other things, an attempt to provide data on several different Caribbean societies, which may in turn afford new insights through comparison and contrast. There is, of course, no pretence to completeness of coverage or to finality of analysis in these papers. From any point of view, the interpretation of Caribbean social organization is still in an initial stage.

The guest co-editors wish to extend their thanks to the contributors for their co-operation and patience; to the editorial staff of the journal, particularly for all sorts of skilled assistance and advice; and to the Director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research and Editor of the journal, Professor H. Dudley Huggins, for his encouragement and support.

Sidney W. Mintz

William H. Davenport

Working Papers On CARIBBEAN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Introduction

By

WILLIAM DAVENPORT

In the past ten years knowledge of Caribbean social structure has grown from almost nothing to a point where patterns of similarity and difference are beginning to emerge, and methodological problems, both descriptive and comparative, are becoming clearer. When, as in this volume, only one aspect of social structure, the family or family organization, is treated, the question must be asked: what parameters are the relevant ones — relevant for understanding the family in its entire social context, and relevant for comparative studies? A few years back Raymond T. Smith¹ in approaching this problem seemed to see such comparative studies as centring around the household unit, its variations in composition, its joint activities and responsibilities, and the interdependence of its internal relationships. More recently, Solien² has reminded us of the distinction to be made between household and kinship which has been utilized for many years by anthropologists studying more exotic societies. These are valuable suggestions, but the Caribbean presents us with a double-edged problem: the variation of social forms both within and between societies. Recently, M. G. Smith³ has introduced the concept of "pluralism" by which he has suggested such variation might profitably be examined. However useful this suggestion may prove to be for the study of family organization, we are still faced with a methodological problem: are comparative studies of family organization to be based upon the salient and significant features revealed by studying the family in its unique context or upon a more generalized theoretical approach which delineates features that are assumed to be pertinent to the family organizations in all instances? Where differences are large, this is not so serious a problem, for widely differing forms and structures are easily contrasted. Where they are small, and particularly where they are only a matter of statistical dif-

¹Smith, Raymond T. "The Family in the Caribbean," in *Caribbean Studies: A Symposium*. Institute of Social and Economic Research, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, 1957.

²Solien, Nancy L. "Household and Family in the Caribbean," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, pp. 101-106.

³Smith, Michael G. "Social and Cultural Pluralism." *Annals of the New York Academy of Science*, Vol. 83, art. 5, New York, pp. 763-785.

ferences between identical sets of alternatives, the problem is magnified, for not only must our distinctions be more discriminating and our parameters more clearly defined, but also our theoretical propositions must be more explicitly stated.

Comparing the explicit and implied positions of the investigators contributing to this symposium, we note some relevant similarities and differences. Pursuing an argument Raymond T. Smith⁴ used in his British Guiana study and following his own work in two Jamaican communities, Cumper⁵ demonstrates ways in which Barbadian households and conjugal forms vary by occupational categories. (See comments by Greenfield⁶ in this connection.) While recognizing class or status differences as well as mobility patterns between them, he does not consider class and social status to be relevant variables in themselves since, as he makes abundantly clear, he is dealing with purely economic phenomena. Crucial to Cumper's analysis is his concept of "equilibrium," by which he seems to mean the double relationship of a head of household to his dependents on the one hand and, by way of his tangible and intangible economic assets, his relationship to the economic system on the other. In other words, Cumper's model emphasizes two systems, economic and familial, and he has tried to clarify their interrelations. Whether or not he would include a status or class system in which different styles of life are recognized, and whether or not he would in this way account for the alternative (i.e., common law and legal) modes of marriage he distinguishes, is not clear.

Wilson analyzes Providencia in terms of four interrelated systems: an external economy; loosely articulated communities; a marriage and kinship system; and internal differentiation by social class. Variations in households are seen principally as organizational responses to the combined forces impinging from all these spheres of influence, though Wilson also pays some service to a "developmental cycle," which in itself accounts for some observable differences. While the present writer does not question the hierarchical differentiations within Providencia society, calling the distinguishable categories social classes does not seem to be wholly appropriate.

The context of family organization on Carriacou is seen by M. G. Smith as a society, related to an external economic system, hierarchically undifferentiated, and spatially divided into communities and household units, which are cross-cut by kinship and lineage alignments. The individual life cycle, including marriage and mating, religious beliefs, and ritual obligations, are the threads by which the social units are defined and pulled together.

While the above investigators have attempted to see these island societies as wholes, Bastien and Davenport have restricted their descriptive analyses

⁴Smith, Raymond T. *The Negro Family in British Guiana*. Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1957.

⁵See also Cumper, George E. "The Jamaican Family: Village and Estate," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, pp. 76-108.

⁶Greenfield, Sidney M. "Socio-Economic Factors and Family Form," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, 1960, pp. 72-85.

to rural and lower-class segments of what they see as complex societies having both rural-urban and stratified differences. Such are the limitations of the community studies from which their data are largely drawn. Within this restricted universe, Bastien sees family organization largely in terms of cultural rather than structural constructs. Household, kinship, land tenure, marriage, regulation of incest and other features are assemblages of patterns, presumably historically determined, which for comparative purposes would be set against similar sets of traits and complexes in other cultures. Presumably, Caribbean societies would have similar inventories of these traits or patterns since they have similar historical backgrounds.

Variations in Jamaican rural households are described by Davenport as being determined by the interaction of 1) a relatively fixed system of kinship relationships; 2) mating and marriage alternatives; 3) the Fortesian scheme of a developmental cycle; and 4) an internal economic system. Not stated but implied are the discreteness of local communities, sharp distinctions between social classes, and normative and social control systems supporting structural and organizational phenomena.

Despite these differences in approach, there is surprising convergence toward the position that the most obvious family grouping — the household — without a strictly determined structural pattern of its own, is largely a dependent sub-system of relationships. To understand its variable organizational manifestations is not to focus on it, but upon its context.

With apologies to those who may not agree with some of the above statements or share the writer's interest in kinship systems, let us make some comparisons of these. In all five societies described here we seem to be dealing with systems in which lineal and sibling relations are the only important ones. In contrast to these, avuncular-nepotic and more distant collateral relationships are of secondary importance. By this is meant that the relationships of an ego to his grandparents, his parents, and his siblings are the only ones to which rights, duties, and obligations are precisely defined, regardless of all other considerations. Secondary kin relations (i.e., to aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and so forth) are, for the most part, situationally determined. When kinship is invoked in these relationships, they are modelled after the primary relations. *Compadrazgo* and other ritual kinship relations, where observed, are to be seen in this same way — as fictive primary relations invoked in limited or specialized contexts.

Kinship systems in all societies serve to designate for an ego differential sets of relationships for all his kinsmen, not according to a universal set of criteria, but according to features which each society considers significant. In Caribbean societies those features of consanguinity seem always to be generation, collaterality, and (but not always) the sex of the referent. Such structures as the Haitian *lakou* and the Carriacou "bloods" do not impose themselves on the kinship system as that is conceived here. However, in Jamaica, Carriacou, and possibly Providencia and Barbados the household

group seems to be so recognized. Thus we find the distinctions of "outside" and "home" to designate marital and residential features of children's relationships to their fathers. This distinction may have relevance to a definition of siblingship, one of the two crucial relationships in these systems of consanguinity. Subtle differences between half- and full-siblings on the one hand, and co-residing and non-co-residing siblings on the other may yet be found to exist if the problem is studied more closely. Ideally, however, there is the solidarity of siblings as clearly stated for Carriacou, Haiti, Jamaica, and Providencia; yet these societies also lay stress upon sibling independence with respect to the separate households they may establish. In other words, siblings are jurally equivalent (with the possible exceptions mentioned above) with respect to common parents, but are expected to be co-operatively independent with respect to their own domestic groups. If one's interests lie in such matters, then Caribbean societies offer the perfect setting for the study of structural and jural variations as they occur in this one type of kinship system, both within and between societies. Careful studies of this kind would certainly have theoretical value for kinship theory, which tends to neglect these types of systems out of a preference for studying more exotic types.

With regard to marriage and affinity, it is clear now that in the Caribbean we are not only dealing with alternative patterns, but also with problems of value. In Jamaica and Providencia, for example, common-law or consensual unions are clearly differentiated from legally and ritually sanctioned marriages, by some individuals at least, in terms of differences of the jural commitments between the partners. A marriage, religiously validated by a clergyman and socially marked by its accompanying wedding party, is a contract which neither party may terminate by individual wish or mutual consent. A common-law union, while recognizing equally important reciprocal rights and duties, is not so regarded. In addition to these quasi-legal distinctions, the different modes of conjugality represent different styles of life to which one adheres by choice. In Jamaica, at least, some people are just as determined not to be identified with one as they are determined to be identified with the other. It is a matter of pride, value, and self identity; but to what extent this is true in other societies has not been made clear. In such areas where choice is permitted, where values, social reference, and self-evaluation are important determinants, a purely structural or cultural interpretation leaves out the crucial psychological components which underlie the choices. A structural analysis or a cultural plan of a society is but an inanimate blueprint of a way of life as it looks from the outside. To make it meaningful in terms of human beings and their behaviour, the structural and cultural patterns must be seen in terms of the social values and motivations to which the individuals who constitute and who maintain the society are responding. Many of the problems presented by "cultural pluralism" became clarified when pluralistic sets of behaviour are seen as interdependent

but contrastive modes of life in which different values, modes of self-image, and motivational structures are deeply involved.

Of particular interest in three of the papers of this symposium are the forms of joint-family organizations which emerge. In Jamaica the compound family unit which unites around "family land" is brought together by mutual interests in the property and by a deep respect for the wishes of the common ancestor who deeded it to remain common and undivided among his descendants. The underlying principles of siblingship and collaterality as mentioned in connection with kinship preclude the possibility of this group becoming a fully corporate group in perpetuity. It is not clear whether the Haitian *lakou* is a similar family grouping, whether it is conceived as a fully corporate and perpetual group or whether, like the pre-Communist peasant family of rural China, it grows out of a combination of cumulative economic successes and the control of competitive rivalries among siblings' households, by a respected and worthy family head. Furthermore, Bastien informs us that the *lakou* are in decline in Marbial Valley, but he does not indicate whether this is due to population increases and land exhaustion, to the decreasing importance of family ritual in *Vodun* rites (replaced by church-centred Christian ritual), or to other influences which are promoting greater social and economic individualism.

Like the Haitian *lakou*, the Carriacou "bloods" are joint families constituted around strong ritual, economic, and social interests. Although classed as segmentary patrilineages, certainly the processes of segmentation as described by M. G. Smith are unique, in that collateral distance alone is the means by which differentiation is achieved. It is seriously questioned here whether the term "lineage" is really appropriate, for despite the meagre data given, it would seem that these are not descent groups, but patrilocally extended families which expand to the collateral limits of effective or recognized consanguinity, and at this point break up into more restricted groups. Lacking the inevitable continuity which the principle of descent implies, such groups seem deprived of the most salient aspects of lineage structure. Unfortunately, Smith's earlier article⁷ on land rights does not clarify the point either.

Although many structural and organizational problems remain to be studied in Caribbean societies — and doubtless our knowledge of these will increase in the next decade as it has in the past — much interesting research in the general area of family organization can be based directly upon what has already been completed. For example, one point where all investigators agree is that household compositions do vary greatly, and two sources of this variation are to be found in the permissive mating patterns and conjugal instability during the childbearing years. This brings about a situation in which large numbers of children are reared in family groups without a

⁷Smith, Michael G. "The Transformation of Land Rights by Transmission in Carriacou." *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2, University College of the West Indies, 1956, pp. 103-138.

father or with a father substitute who, according to the principles of kinship, may not exercise full control or authority over all of his wife's offspring. Any personality theory will predict that this kind of a context for socialization will produce differing kinds of adult personalities. A number of hypotheses can be formulated, suggesting how this situation would affect such variables as independence, the handling of authority, shame, guilt and other social attitudes. In other words, family organization differences may be directly related to individual adult personality differences. The variety and magnitude of these differences in adulthood might also be reflected in community organization, as for example in the kinds of social controls, the systems of informal authority, and the integrative institutions to be found with them. Thus taking account of psychological theory, we may be able to establish unsuspected links between economic, structural, and organizational phenomena. It is certain that studies of the family in the Caribbean need not cease when we approach the discovery of all of the differences and similarities there are to be found. Rather, this is the point at which we may begin to investigate the implications which these similarities and differences may have in other parts of society.

Household and Occupation in Barbados

By

GEORGE E. CUMPER

In a published paper an attempt was made to analyze certain sociological and economic data on two Jamaican communities, one a "peasant" village and the other a sugar estate, in order to throw light on the relation between the worker's role in the economic system and his social background.¹ The general aim of this paper is the same; but it is based, not on data for certain communities within a larger society, but on a sample of households representative of all sections of the population of the island of Barbados. These data are used to explore two aspects of Barbadian society: the composition and function of the household in different occupational groups, and the nature of mobility among these groups.

Source and Limitations of the Data

In 1955 the writer conducted a sample survey of employment for the government of Barbados. This survey offered an opportunity to collect information on the social background of the labour force and particularly on the composition of the sample households and the occupational mobility of the sample population.

The data used here relate to the households covered by the later stages of the employment survey, being a systematic sub-sample by households of the sub-districts used as a first sampling stage. The number of households is 1,296, comprising 5,364 persons, and these were an effectively random sample of approximately 1 in 42 of the population of the island. A more detailed account of the sampling procedure is given in a report on the employment survey prepared for the government of Barbados.²

Certain defects in the data should be mentioned here. First, the use of census-type methods carried with it a limitation on the intensity of investigation. The data on the composition of the sample households do not give a direct or complete picture of family composition. The number of cases in which there are non-family relations within the household can be ignored. But there are important cases of family relations which extend over household boundaries — for example, old people who are supported by their children though they live apart from them. Only one relationship of this type was covered (by an *ad hoc* question) — that in which a woman without other employment was maintained by a relative or mate in another household.

¹Cumper, George E. "The Jamaican Family: Village and Estate," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1958, pp. 76-108.

²Cumper, George E. *Report on Employment in Barbados*, Bridgetown, Barbados, W.I., 1959.

Second, no information was collected on marital status other than that which emerged from the pattern of recorded relationships within the household. This was an error. It should be remembered that in the tabulations used below the distinction between married and single persons is based principally on the presence of a spouse in the household. Hence, for example, a man separated from his legal wife and living alone is shown as single.

Third, the collection of data on occupational mobility, included in the third of the series of four surveys made, was impeded by the occurrence of a hurricane during the field work period. The damage and disorganization was particularly severe in the urban area, and the proportion of non-response was therefore higher there. It is assumed below that no important bias arose from this, but the assumption may be wrong.

Tabulation Procedure

The analysis of both household composition and occupational mobility is based on a breakdown into eight occupational groups, formed by bringing together those households, the basis for whose economic relations with the rest of the society appeared to be similar. The main criterion used is the occupation of the head of the household, as recorded at the four surveys taken during 1955. The titles by which the groups will be referred to, and the occupations covered by each group, are as follows:

White collar — all occupations for which literacy is the prime requisite; most of these require some qualifications expressed in terms of formal education, and confer a high status.

Skilled — skilled and semi-skilled wage-earners, whose jobs require a specific technical skill and usually provide regularity of employment (protected by union organization).

Own account — skilled workers, small traders and others who possess some skill, technical or commercial, but are not attached to a single employer, and must therefore control some amount of capital.

Non-farm labourers — a group of occupations requiring little education or technical skill but (in Barbados) usually conferring regularity of employment through union organization or other means. The main occupations in this group are portworkers, porters, ordinary seamen, factory labourers and labourers in government departments.

Domestics — domestic servants and pensioners dependent on a household of higher status.

Peasant — this group consists of workers, mainly agricultural, who own and work a plot of land (or rent more than an acre of land). Almost all of the working members of these households hold wage jobs at some time during the year.

Renters — agricultural labourers renting less than an acre of land (this has a special significance in Barbados, an account of which is given below).

Landless labourers — agricultural labourers without access to land, either owned or rented, including many casual workers without guarantee of regular employment.

For certain purposes the last three groups are considered below as a single group including all agricultural labourers, and the skilled and own account groups are also considered as one.

These groups do not correspond to classes or status levels, though there would be general agreement that households of high status are likely to be found in the white collar group, and those of low status in the various groups of labourers' occupations. Our results suggest that the use of groups based

on economic relationships is at least as fruitful as that of status groups or classes in the study of the household, and of course more so in the study of occupational mobility. Some of the economic attributes of the groups are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1. MAIN ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS USED.

	White Collar	Skilled	Own A/c	Non- farm lab- ourer	Domes- tic	Pea- sant	Rent- er	Land- less lab- ourer	Total All Groups
No. of house- holds in sample	164	215	179	161	201	97	137	140	1294
Average per- sons per household	4.2	4.8	3.9	4.1	3.3	4.9	4.5	3.7	4.1
Average in- come of male head (legally married)	\$39.60	17.49	11.42	19.32	—	18.59	14.79	15.76	21.44
Average in- come of female head	\$26.25	6.71	6.53	11.21	4.79	6.90	8.93	9.77	8.59
Percentage of household in- come con- tributed by men —									
Households with male head	88	88	80	91	58	77	76	80	84
Households with female head	18	77	54	64	60	72	57	49	55
Percentage of households —									
Owning house & house-spot	46	38	47	27	19	72	8	21	33
Owning house, renting spot	13	48	33	45	37	27	86	58	43

The categories used in the analysis of household composition are given in detail in an appendix to this paper. The procedure used is substantially the same as that of the earlier paper.³ The detailed tabulation of household composition for the whole sample is also given in the appendix; the tabulations for the individual groups are available in mimeograph. Their main features are summarised in Table 2.

The procedure by which the data on occupational mobility were tabulated is described along with the discussion of the results below.

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION IN BARBADOS

Both family and household in Barbados present a picture broadly like that found in other non-Indian societies in the British Caribbean (see, for example,

³Cumper, 1958, *op. cit.*

Smith and Kruijer⁴ and Clarke⁵ on Jamaica; R. T. Smith⁶ on British Guiana; Braithwaite⁷ on Trinidad). It is a complex picture, not because of any elaboration of the socially approved system of kinship, but because of the great variations in the stability of marital unions within the society, and the absence of any fully accepted means of accommodating the effects of instability. Most household groups can be accounted for in terms of a process in which the nuclear family plays the formative part, but in many households the male role is marginal and is either unfilled or is filled by a succession of men. In these cases the mother-child relation comes to predominate over other relationships as that which binds together the family group.

One feature of Barbadian society forms a special condition which must have some influence on household composition: the highly unequal sex ratio. The overall sex ratio of the 1955 sample was 824 males per thousand females (that given by the 1946 census was 801); in families with a legally married head it was 980, in those with a common-law head 880, in those with a single male head 1,940 and in those with a female head 595. In a sense the situation may be summarised by saying that in the family headed by a legally married couple (the most generally approved type of family) the sex ratio is approximately equal, and that the 'problem' of locating the surplus women within the family system is solved by the formation of households headed by women and consisting preponderantly of women. Such a simplification at least serves to emphasize the fact that the sex ratio is one of the limiting conditions to which the household system must conform.

Some inequality in the sex ratio in Barbados has persisted for at least a century, because of the effect of migration in removing the male population of working age. The present ratio of about 800 males per thousand females (which obtains not only at higher ages, where it is normal in most populations, but throughout the reproductive period) represents a considerable shift toward equality from the 1921 level of 679. On this and other questions of Barbadian demography, reference may be made to Roberts⁸ and Lowenthal.⁹

This paper follows the practice which has become common in the discussion of the West Indian family, in spite of the objections of some writers (e.g. Clarke¹⁰), of referring to unions which involve co-residence but lack legal or religious sanction as "common-law" unions. The phrase is not in fact the usual one in Barbados; a "common-law" wife (in our terminology) would

⁴Smith, M. G. and Kruijer, G. S., *Sociological Manual for Extension Workers in the Caribbean*. Caribbean Affairs Series, Extra Mural Department, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, August, 1959.

⁵Clarke, Edith, *My Mother Who Fathered Me*. Allen and Unwin, London, 1957.

⁶Smith, R. T. *The Negro Family in British Guiana*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1956.

⁷Braithwaite, L. "Social Stratification in Trinidad," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 4, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, 1957.

⁸Roberts, G. W., "Emigration from the Island of Barbados," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 3, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, 1957.

⁹Lowenthal, D. "The Population of Barbados," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 4, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica.

¹⁰Clarke, Edith, *op. cit.*

in practice be referred to as "girl friend" or, more precisely but less commonly, as "reputed wife".

In Table 2 are presented some indices which permit a summary comparison of household composition from one occupational group to another. The picture in each group is examined in detail in the following sections.

The White-Collar Household

In the white-collar group the majority of children are found in the relationship to be expected, in the simple nuclear family; 64 per cent are present as sons and daughters in a household headed by a man and his legal wife. The proportion found in households based on a common-law union is extremely low. 19 per cent of children are found in households headed by women, but of these the greater part are the head's children, and not her daughter's children. A household consisting of mother, daughter and daughter's children, which has been so much commented on by writers on the West Indian family, does not occur in this group.

The predominance of legal marriage over other forms is clear. From the thirties age-group onward, about 70 per cent of men are married and heads of their own households. The proportion "ever married" is no doubt higher, since there are a small number of widowers; but the age difference between marital partners (men being some years older than their wives) and the heavier male mortality at high ages means that in this, as in all groups in Barbados, widows are much more numerous than widowers. This fact helps to account for the lower incidence of legal marriage among women compared with men at ages above 30. The age distribution of the female population suggests that some form of sex-selective mobility into the group is at work, perhaps through the adoption of white-collar occupations (such as shop attendant) by women whose unions with men of the skilled group have been broken.

At ages past 60 death has separated many of the married couples. But more than half of the men at these ages are still living with a legal spouse, and of the rest most are still heads of their own households, with children and other relatives around them. The proportion of women married and with spouse living is much less — about one third; the remainder are either found as widows heading households which include their unmarried child or children, or as dependants in the households of their married sons or (more usually) daughters. Neither men nor women in this group are likely to be left isolated in old age — there are only three cases in the sample of a person aged 60 or over living quite alone. It would appear that men hardly ever abandon the headship of the household with advancing age; women, on the other hand, not uncommonly become dependent on their children and children's spouses when widowed.

The data also permit us to say something of the allocation of economic roles within the family in this group. In those families with a man as head by far the greater part of aggregate income — 88 per cent — is derived from

TAB

Age

% c
in
of
mar
cou
of l
gran

% i
hol
fem
—c
head

gran
head

Age
10-5

Ratio
head
hous

% of
lega
ried
—ag
—ag

Ratio
to c
law
ages
ages

% of
with
as h
hous

% of
when
rema
paren
hous

Age C
years

Ratio
head
hous

% of
peop
in h
head
their
child

• 6

TABLE 2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS.

	White Collar	Skilled	Own A/c	Non- farm lab- ourer	Domes- tic	Pea- sant	Rent- er	Land- less lab- ourer	Total All Groups
Age Group 0-9 years:									
% of children in household of legally married couple—child of head	64	63	28	39	3	45	24	8	37
grandchild	5	10	12	6	1	21	11	—	9
% in house- holds with female head —child of head —	11	4	28	12	48	1	9	41	17
grandchild of head —	3	2	12	11	10	10	21	28	13
Age Group 10-59 years:									
Ratio M/F heads of households	2.7	6.9	0.9	2.5	0.1	3.4	1.3	0.6	1.4
% of men legally mar- ried									
—ages 30-39	65	66	35	40	7	55	29	37	45
—ages 40-49	78	67	46	41	—	83	64	47	59
Ratio of legal to common- law unions—									
ages 30-39	22.0	5.1	1.1	1.5	0.8	*	1.1	0.9	2.2
ages 40-49	16.5	4.3	5.0	1.4	—	6.3	3.6	2.7	3.9
% of unions with woman as head of household	3	5	14	7	58	7	13	25	11
% of unions where couple remain in parental household	3	7	9	8	26	11	17	24	11
Age Group 60 years & over:									
Ratio M/F heads of households	3.7	1.9	0.3	2.0	0.1	1.8	2.2	0.3	0.6
% of old people found in households headed by their children	18	20	8	7	5	2	7	10	9

* 6 legal, 0 common-law unions.

the earnings of men, mainly from those of the head. 80 per cent of the wives in the group are outside the labour force. The income earning role is therefore clearly specialized for the men, and the role of providing domestic services and rearing children for their wives. In the higher ranks of the group, of course, part of the wife's function devolves on domestic servants, but she retains control of these aspects of family life.

In the households with a female head, on the other hand, women contribute most of the aggregate income (82 per cent). This is partly a reflection of the fact that the proportion of men present in these households is low, but it suggests that there is nothing in the nature of the occupations included in the group to prevent the woman taking over the main role of income earning if circumstances compel her.

Almost half of all households live in the head's own house on his own land, and most of the remainder rent house and land. At ages above fifty, by far the greater number of heads of households have their own houses and house-spots. Only about 10 per cent of households live in free quarters (mainly the managerial staff of plantations). 13 per cent live in their own houses built on rented land; this is the commonest form of tenure in most other groups.

In summary, these data show the typical "white-collar" family to consist of: a man whose function it is to keep the household in economic equilibrium with the rest of society; his legal wife who has the functions of domestic service and child rearing; and the children of these two, who will be educated to take their places in the same occupational group, will marry and set up other, similar, households in the late twenties or early thirties, and will take in mother or mother-in-law as a dependant on the father's death.

The Skilled Wage-Earner's Household

The skilled group is one of those most deeply involved in the processes of inter-group mobility. It forms roughly the same proportion of both the urban and rural populations of the island. There are certain differences between the urban and rural skilled. For example, the urban skilled workers show a high rate of geographical mobility — 41 per cent of male heads of households were found in their parish of birth whereas the rural rate (81 per cent in their parish of birth) is little different from that of the landless labourers. In spite of this, the urban and rural skilled workers do not differ significantly in their pattern of household composition, and are therefore treated here as one group.

The urban skilled group comprises mainly construction workers, chauffeurs and miscellaneous factory operatives. The rural group includes similar workers, but consists mainly of sugar factory tradesmen and machine tenders. The line between these latter occupations is not easy to draw, since many rural "mechanics" and "machinists" have served their apprenticeship in the same factory as that in which they work as adults and have become familiar with the maintenance of only the type of machinery found in that factory.

Such limited apprenticeships provide an easy path of entry into the skilled labour force and help to account for the low geographical mobility of the rural skilled group.

There are few skilled occupations for women in Barbados, save that of seamstress, which is practised, or professed, mainly by younger women. Hence the skilled group of households includes few with female heads.

The majority of children in the households of the skilled group were found in households headed by a legally married couple — 63 per cent as sons and daughters of the head, and 9 per cent as daughter's children. Another 13 per cent were found as head's children or stepchildren in common law households. A distinctive feature of the distribution of children in this group is that boys outnumber girls. Unless due merely to sampling error, this seems explicable only by some selective mechanism in the formation of unions by men in skilled occupations — for example, that a liaison with a woman in another group is more likely to result in legal marriage if the woman bears a boy.

The proportion of men legally married is high in this group not only because the proportion who ultimately marry is high, but also because legal marriage has a greater importance at earlier ages than in any other group. Thus in the age group 20-29, 26 per cent of men and 41 per cent of women were legally married. A substantial proportion of these early unions did not lead immediately to the setting up of an independent household, since the man joined the household of his wife's married parents. In only one case did a wife join her husband's parents' household.

Common law unions are not as markedly concentrated at the younger ages in this group as in the other groups of our sample. Among men, they increase in importance up to the age group 40-49. This suggests that the unions involved are relatively stable; and the high proportion of stepchildren in these households may be a pointer in the same direction, since a man is unlikely to take his wife's outside children unless he intends the union to be a "serious" one. If this is so, stable unions — legal or common law — are formed more rapidly at the early ages in this group than in any other.

Of the people over 60 years of age in this group, most men are still heads of their own households, and most women dependants of heads — wives, mothers and mothers-in-law. The sex ratio at these ages is unusually equal and suggests that many of the widows of skilled workers drop out of the occupational group when their husbands die, probably to join the own account group (as small traders) or the domestics.

The share of the men in the aggregate earnings of the households in this group far outweighs that of the women — almost 90 per cent in households with male heads, and about 75 per cent in households with female heads. This is partly because most women were outside the labour force — 78 per cent of legal wives, 62 per cent of common law wives, 74 per cent of female heads of households and 45 per cent of other women aged 14 and over. The

proportion of women not working is slightly higher in this group than in the white-collar group.

These data show the household in the skilled group as organised round the male breadwinner, highly stable during his life time and able to take in children of the second generation. But the data also suggest that there are many cases where the death of the man involves a loss of economic status for the family; of all the groups which are associated with upward occupational mobility this is the one where it is hardest for the advantages of one generation to be passed down to the next.

The Own Account Worker's Household

The own account group includes skilled tradesmen working on a jobbing basis (mainly construction workers), small shopkeepers and traders. Most of these occupations have their counterparts in the skilled wage earner and white-collar groups. Though the self-employed man has greater independence his economic situation appears to be rather worse than that of his wage-earning counterpart; his income, on our data, is less, his prospect of employment less secure, and he has to risk a certain amount of capital in his work (though this amount may be small — shopkeepers often operate in small rented shops on what is virtually a commission basis, jobbing tradesmen often receive an advance from customers to cover materials and even part of their labour). The same is broadly true of self-employed women, who include dressmakers, with capital invested in a sewing machine, and small traders. The line between self-employed and wage workers in the same occupation is not a hard and fast one, and the same individual may be found in either group at different times. It is shown below that there is a tendency for the older men to move into this group from wage employment. Women appear to move into the group from an early age, and the proportion of all women found in this group increases steadily with age.

The children in the own account group are divided about equally between male — and female-headed households. In each, roughly a third are of the second generation — mainly daughter's children — and among these boys tend to outnumber girls, as they did, but more markedly, in the skilled group. The number of children in common law households is small.

The proportion of adult males legally married is extremely low in this group. This is not because of the frequency of common-law unions — the ratio between legal and common law unions is much the same as in the skilled group — but reflects the numerical importance of the household based on the single man, often living in isolation. Similarly the households with female heads comprise mainly those in which the head has no spouse present, and there is only one case of a daughter's husband being found in such a household. This group is recruited to a disproportionate extent from older men and from women whose union has been broken. To the single man work on one's own account may be preferred for personal reasons if there is no family responsibility to force one to earn regularly. To the woman with

chi
lab
job
wo
the
don
I
hol
hou
exc
in
gro
up
rat
Of
liv
T
gro
from
we
of j
mor
hol
abo
of t
and
typ
The
T
Mid
por
from
ten
tinu
and
farr
clue
ord
T
tha
but
and
sug
wor
55

children but no spouse it is almost the only form of work available above the labourer grade which does not call for white collar qualifications; and the job of a small trader operating three or four days a week, or a laundress working at home, has the advantage that the hours can be adjusted to permit the mother to look after house and children in a way barred to the full-time domestic servant or urban labourer.

In this group the older men are found mainly as married heads of households, and none have been relegated to the position of dependant in the households of a son or daughter in the same occupational group. We cannot exclude the possibility that some own account workers move out of the group in old age, joining the households of children in a different occupational group. The children of own account workers do not themselves usually take up own account jobs till late in life, if at all. Hence the very unequal sex ratio of the age group 60 and over, which includes only 13 men to 46 women. Of these women, two thirds are heads of households, most with their children living with them.

The interpretation of the household composition data for the own account group is complicated by the fact that the group is being recruited at all ages from the skilled and other groups. The main facts can be accounted for if we distinguish two elements. The first, consisting mainly of the households of jobbing tradesmen, is akin to the skilled worker group save that it includes more households headed by single men. It corresponds roughly to the households with male heads, and is based on male earnings, which account for about 80 per cent of aggregate income. The second element consists mainly of the households headed by women — small traders, with some seamstresses and laundresses — who gather round them families of the "grandmother" type in which half or more of the family income comes from the women.

The Non-Farm Labourer's Household

The urban non-farm labourers are mainly born in Bridgetown and St. Michael and follow certain traditional urban occupations, such as deck hands, portworkers and roadworkers. They do not differ greatly in income level from the skilled worker group; the portworkers and seamen in particular tend to enjoy high earnings for short periods though their work is not continuous. In both these occupations there exists a register of qualified workers and employment is at least in theory rotated among them. The rural non-farm labourers form a smaller and less clearly distinguished group; they include many workers in sugar factories who are distinguished from the ordinary agricultural labourer by a somewhat higher level of incomes.

The ultimate importance of legal marriage in the group is not much less than in the skilled group (63 per cent of men at ages 50-59 are legally married) but our data suggest that the average age of legal marriage is much later, and the age range within which common law unions are found is broader, suggesting that these unions are of the stable type. The proportion of wives working is much the same in this group for common law and legal unions — 55 per cent against 64 per cent.

In its general features the household composition of this group shows a predominance of households with male heads, and a heavy dependence on male earnings, which form 90 per cent of aggregate earnings in male headed households and 80 per cent in the urban female headed households. It is only in the relatively small group of rural households with female heads that female earnings are important.

The Domestic's Household

By definition, almost all households headed by domestics have female heads. In this and in general income level the group resembles that of the landless labourers. But mobility between the two groups is small. The domestics tend to be derived from the non-farm labourers and the skilled group, and represent a higher economic and educational level than the landless group.

Practically all the children in the domestics group are found in households with female heads — 55 per cent as children of the head, 24 per cent as children's children and the rest in various other relationships.

By far the largest single element in the adult population of this group is the female household heads, followed by their sons and daughters. In about 10 per cent of the households with female heads, a man is present as husband of the head. In nearly all these cases there is a common-law union. There are a very few cases of a daughter's husband being found in the mother's household, but no cases of a son's wife being received into a household with female head.

Among the old people aged 60 and over most were the female heads of households. Only one of these (of 59) had a husband in the household and nearly one third were living completely alone. There were indications in the data that the majority of the women heads of households in the country were widows, while the majority in the town had never been legally married.

It is clear that in the domestics group we have brought together a large group of households in which the position of the adult men is marginal. This is particularly true of the urban part of the group. Among the rural households it is the sons of the head who contribute the greater part of the earnings of the household; in the urban households the male dependants make the largest single contribution, but the heads' and daughters' earnings together account for more than half the total.

But certain other data suggest that the position of the male in the family is more important than the data on the household would lead one to believe. It became clear in the course of the survey that the households with female heads could not in many cases be based on the earnings of the head as declared to the enumerator, since many heads were recorded as being outside the labour force. A question was therefore asked in the last phase of the survey about the source of support of all households in which no member was employed. The results for the female-headed households in the domestic group are summarized in Table 2A.

TABLE

Head
Spous
Remit
Help
Daugh
Tot
Other
Gifts
Tot
Pensio
Other
Total
No d

TH
hous
avail
hous
or li
supp
emig
"frie
cord
thir
or c
play
be s
spou
from
othe
mor
from
carr
ly r
kee
no p
to v
T
grou
hou
num
The
Pea
hap

TABLE 2A. DOMESTIC GROUP: SOURCE OF SUPPORT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH FEMALE HEADS.

	Urban	Rural	Total
Head employed in survey	36	9	45
Spouse present in household	10	8	18
Remittance	7	4	11
Help from man friend	8	2	10
Daughter kept by man	1	—	1
Total dependent on unions	26	14	40
Others in household employed	13	3	16
Gifts from relatives	8	11	19
Total dependent on other kin	21	14	35
Pension	28	8	36
Other	2	3	5
Total responses	113	48	161
No data	17	10	27

These data modify considerably the picture of family structure based on household composition alone. A quarter of the households for whom data was available depended mainly on the head's old age pension; these were mainly households consisting of one old person with a partner or one or two relatives, or living alone. These old people aside, one third of the households were supported or subsidized by money from an absent husband (remittances from emigrants are an important feature of the Barbadian economy) or from a "friend" outside the household. Maintenance orders were not separately recorded, but some were no doubt included under these two heads. Another third of the household heads were supported by relatives, in the household or outside. The remainder, consisting of household heads who were employed in the survey week, were not asked the relevant question and it may be safely assumed that some of these also received some subsidy from absent spouses, men friends or relatives. It seems reasonable to assume that apart from the old folk of pensionable age (in Barbados all over 65, and certain others, receive a small pension — in 1955 averaging \$1.20 a week), a third or more of all households with female heads in this group receive some support from a man who is, or has been, the husband or lover of the head. This carries the further implication that the union involved was sufficiently seriously regarded by the man for him to contribute voluntarily to the woman's upkeep, since in spite of the law relating to maintenance and bastardy there is no practically effective way of making a man contribute to keeping a woman to whom he acknowledges no obligation.

The corresponding data have not been extracted for other occupational groups, but on a superficial view it appears that much the same holds for households with female heads, in all groups where these households are numerically important.

The Peasant Household

Peasant proprietors are found scattered throughout Barbados, but are perhaps commonest in the Scotland district and the part of the windward coast

"under the cliff". It would be hard to find a peasant community in Barbados, however; most peasant proprietors work for wages on plantations at some time, many of them regularly, and live in close contact with plantations and plantation workers. They are not to be compared directly with the members of isolated peasant villages or districts found elsewhere in the West Indies (e.g. Carriacou, certain areas of Jamaica). It is a suggestive fact that although the term "peasant proprietor" is in common use in Barbados, it was hardly used by members of the sample to report their fathers' occupation. A possible interpretation would seem to be that it connotes not a specific occupation but a stage or form within the general occupational category of agricultural labourer. Smith and Kruijer¹¹ suggest a rather similar sub-category among Jamaican agricultural workers, though they interpret it in terms of class.

We have already noted that the age distribution of the peasant group in our sample suggests that it is continuously recruited from the agricultural labourers and to a less extent from other rural workers. While it cannot be shown on our data that this process leads to an increase in the incomes of the mobile individuals, it must be rated as a form of upward mobility. It does not involve geographical mobility; the proportion of heads of households found in their parish of birth was 92 per cent.

For this group the greater proportion of children aged 0 to 9 (73 per cent) are found in households headed by a married couple, but of these children almost a third are the children of the daughter of the head — and in almost every case the daughter is unmarried. In households with female heads, too, it is the children of the unmarried daughter who predominate. The features of the distribution may be summed up as the predominance of households based on legal marriage over other types, and the relative frequency of households of all types which contain three generations.

The predominance of legal marriage is confirmed by the data on the household status of adults which show that at ages 40-49, 80 per cent of both men and women are legally married — a proportion exceeded by no other group in the sample. By comparison with other groups showing a high incidence of legal marriage, the men in the peasant group appear to marry somewhat later. Only one case was found in the sample of a married man aged less than 30 — a young man living with his wife's parents.

So long as a man or woman in the peasant group owns land, that person does not quit the headship of the household unit based on that land. All the old people over 60 in this group in our sample, save one woman, were either heads of households or spouses of heads. The majority were found in active legal unions, but there was a substantial group of women without spouse who owned land and headed the family unit based on that land.

In this group the earning power of the household, so far as it came from wage work, was concentrated in the men. In the survey week in crop, 1955, male earnings accounted for 77 per cent of aggregate income in households

¹¹Smith, M. G. and Kruijer, G. J., *op. cit.*

with male heads and 72 per cent in households with female heads. Income from the cultivation of land was not recorded in the survey and the effect of its inclusion on these proportions cannot be certainly estimated. As the figures stand they indicate a very high degree of dependency of households of all types on male earnings. More than half of all wives were recorded as being outside the labour force, though some of these no doubt worked on the family's land.

All the sample households in the peasant group lived in houses owned by the household head, and in 73 per cent of cases the houses were built on the family's own land. This fact has certain implications for the standard of housing comfort. It is commonly said in Barbados that there are three grades of working class housing, corresponding roughly to successive stages in the history of a family. The young independent man starts off by living in a rented room or small house, at a low standard. When he wants to establish a family, he begins by acquiring his own house, on rented land. His power of improving this house is limited by the need to bear in mind the possibility that he may wish to move it elsewhere, and he does not often develop it beyond the simple chattel house of one or two rooms. But if he prospers he can acquire his own house spot, and can then improve the land around the house, attach it to a wall foundation and add other chattel units. The culmination of this stage comes when the facade of the house, or even the whole structure, is rebuilt in stone or cement. Most of our peasant households have presumably reached the third stage, at which the house represents a considerable unifying force in the family group both as a valuable property and as a forum for joint activities.

The Renter's Household

The broad group of agricultural labourers has a degree of occupational stability comparable with that of the white collar households and greater than that of the other groups. The most stable element within this group can be identified with our "renters", among whom in 1955 only 10 per cent of the male heads of households, 10 per cent of the female heads and 20 per cent of the wives of heads were found outside their parish of birth. The general economic circumstances of the renters are uniform throughout the island. 86 per cent of the households in this group lived in houses owned by the head, erected on a house-spot rented usually from a plantation. The houses are usually what is called in Barbados "chattel houses" — wooden frame structures, of a uniform pattern, set on cornerstones (but not attached to the ground) and designed to be dismantled and re-erected by sections. These houses provide another connection between worker and planter; the money to build the house may be advanced by the planter, and the lumber for it may actually be bought on the plantation's account (and so at somewhat better prices than the worker could obtain on his own account). Wage rates for most jobs done by these plantation workers are negotiated by the Barbados

Worker's Union and the Sugar Producers' Association, and apply uniformly throughout the island.

In contrast to the agricultural workers in many areas of the West Indies, the Barbadian plantation worker lives neither in a village nor in housing provided free by the employer within the estate. The workers with sizeable cultivations of their own (our peasant group) have a dispersed pattern of settlement comparable to that of many Jamaican rural districts. But the typical housing area in rural Barbados is the "tenantry", usually an area of poor land beside a road between estates, or on the edge of one of the "cliffs" which divide the otherwise flat landscape. Here, on small rented plots, the workers erect their own chattel houses. This form of housing is also typical of the working class suburbs of Bridgetown, which have grown by the expansion and absorption of rural tenancies.

In the sample of renter's households, the sons and daughters of legally married couples accounted for only 24 per cent of children aged 0-9. Children of the second generation in legally married households (mainly daughter's children) accounted for 11 per cent, and sons and daughters of common law couples for 17 per cent. The greater part of these were children of the head's daughter — that is, the second descending generation in households of the so-called "grandmother" type.

In the renter group legal marriage is the dominant form of co-residential union in the sense that at a given time more persons will be found in legal than in common law marriages. The proportion of persons ultimately entering into legal marriages is little less among renters than among white-collar workers, since in renter households 73 per cent of men aged 50-59 are legally married (against 74 per cent) as are 58 per cent of women aged 40-49 (against 55 per cent). But the average age of legal marriage is clearly later, and the importance of common-law unions at early ages much greater. Moreover, in the white-collar group the setting up of a union implied the setting up of a new household in which the male partner in the union was head, but in the renter group one union in three does not conform to this rule, either in that a woman takes a spouse while remaining head of the household, or in that a man enters the household of his partner's mother without becoming its head. The former type of case concerns mainly the younger men; the latter may occur at any age. There are very few cases, however, of a son's wife being received into the parental household.

The age distribution of the women in this group suggests a transfer into the group of female heads of households in the age group 50-59. It is possible that this is caused by the death of skilled workers who possessed rented land (e.g. sugar factory workers) and the return of their widows to agricultural labour. But no sufficient evidence on this point is available. There is a sharp fall in the proportion of legal unions among women between the age groups 40-49 and 50-59.

Among persons aged 60 and over, few in the renter group are left to live alone. Legally married men and their wives account for only a quarter of

The
The
the re
of bir
with t
division
In h
as the
12Sm

the old people, and members of the ascendant generation are not an important category in this group. The largest single category is that of female heads of households, mainly living with their children but without spouses, the relicts of broken common law unions.

Among women in the renter group, heads of households outnumber wives. Most heads work for wages, even at the highest ages (of 24 female heads aged 60 and over, 13 were in the labour force). Even among wives more than half are employed, whether married legally or at common law. In all types of household men contribute more in the aggregate to household income than women — in households with male heads about 76 per cent, and in households with female heads about 57 per cent. But the women's contribution is not negligible, especially as it is probably somewhat more regular from week to week than that of the men, particularly in the "hard times" season when agricultural earnings are low. The male contribution to the income of households with women as heads comes mainly from the sons of the head, with the daughter's husband and the head's own husband as other contributors.

In most cases the renter household lives in a house owned by the head, erected on rented land. This is as true of the households with female heads as those with male heads. A woman may obtain the rental of a house spot either because she inherits the house of her former spouse, or by application to the plantation in the same way as a male worker. Such an application will have more force if she has a son or other male relative working on the plantation. The chattel house system affords to women almost equal facilities with men for acquiring a house of one's own; and in rural Barbados an independent household is hardly ever found except in its own dwelling.

In summary, the pattern of household composition among renters can hardly be understood simply in terms of the nuclear family. Other relations, or new forms of relations, must be introduced. Of these the most important on the evidence of our material are those between mother and son (as shown by the considerable economic role of the son in households with women as heads), between mother and daughter (as shown by the frequency with which daughter's children are taken into these households), and those between the woman as head of a household and her spouse as a subordinate member. On the other hand, as R. T. Smith¹² has pointed out for a somewhat similar context in British Guiana, the nuclear family remains the commonest form, and most household groups take this form at some stage in their history.

The Landless Labourer's Household

The landless labourers show a slightly higher geographical mobility than the renters (87 per cent of heads and 71 per cent of wives found in their parish of birth) and their occupational mobility connects them rather more strongly with the skilled and own account groups. But there is no marked economic division between the two groups.

In household composition the landless group differs from the renters rather as the latter differ from the peasant households. To consider first the distribu-

¹²Smith, R. T. *op. cit.*

tion of children, whereas in the peasant group most of these were found in male headed households, in the landless group the balance is decisively on the side of the female households. In the former groups the household headed by a married couple showed considerable power to retain and support the children of the couple's unmarried daughters, in the landless group this is not so. In the peasant group those children found in households with female heads were almost entirely the head's grandchildren (corresponding to the fact that a woman was unlikely to be found as head of a household until she had passed the age of childbearing); in the renter group grandchildren outnumbered children of the first generation in female headed households; in the landless group it is the latter that predominate.

This last point is borne out by a further comparison. The age distribution of the sexes in the renter sample suggests that the group received an accession of women heads of households mainly in the age group 50-59; a similar comparison for the landless group suggests that the group receives accessions of this kind from the twenties onward. A more detailed examination of the composition of the households with female heads shows that they include a substantial number of marital unions. There are, over all ages, 17 cases where the head has a husband living in the household (all save two of these are common law unions). There are eight cases of a man living in his mother-in-law's household (all but two of these unions are legal); and there are three cases of a son bringing his wife into his mother's household, two concerning common law unions. The number of unions which do not involve the establishment of an independent household is therefore almost half the total number of unions in the group.

The distribution of old people in the landless group is similar to that in the renter group, though the sex ratio is even more unequal, households with female heads are more numerous and among these households the proportion which consists of a woman living alone is greater. Again, the differences between the renter and landless groups are in a sense extensions of those between the peasant and renter groups.

The same generalization holds for a comparison of employment patterns. More than half the wives of landless labourers work for wages, as do nearly two thirds of the female heads of households (who greatly outnumber the wives). In households with a male head 80 percent of the aggregate income comes from the male members, but in the much more numerous households with a woman as head the male contribution is slightly less than half the aggregate income. The form of house tenure characteristic of the peasant group was outright ownership, and that of the renter group the owned house on rented land; a significant proportion of households in the landless group live in rented or free housing.

The landless labourer group therefore consists mainly of households in which the headship rests with the senior woman present, and in which children of the head remain attached to the household even after they have themselves

Occup
Whit
Skill
Own
Non-
Peas
Rent
Land
Dom
To

borne or begotten children. The adherence of the daughters to the mother's household produces the three-generation pattern of head, daughter and daughter's children. All the evidence converges to emphasize the marginal position of the man in such families.

MOBILITY BETWEEN OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

We have already seen that there are a number of points at which the pattern of household composition can be better understood if we take account of the mobility of workers from one group to another. We can explore the processes of mobility further by an analysis of the survey data collected for that purpose.

Occupational mobility may be divided for our purposes into two main types — that which consists in a difference between the occupational group of the child and that of his parents (called henceforth "inter-generation mobility") and that which consists in differences in the occupational group of the worker at different points in his or her life ("intra-generational mobility"). The latter, in Barbados, can again be divided into a difference between the occupation which forms the worker's point of entry into the labour force and that which he follows when he becomes adult, and further differences which arise during his adult life.

The problems arising out of the process of entering the labour force have been discussed at length in a report on employment in Barbados.¹³ It was shown there that the pattern of first jobs differs from the pattern of adult occupations mainly in that a much larger number of young people are apprenticed to skilled occupations than can find adult employment in those occupations. Many of these apprenticeships prove abortive, and it is estimated that only half of those who enter apprenticeship find skilled employment as adults. There is therefore at this stage a movement out of the group of skilled workers into other groups — mainly into labouring occupations. In the case of girls the situation is complicated by the fact that many of those who are apprenticed as seamstresses have no firm intention of practising an adult occupation, and will pass out of the labour force as soon as they can establish a lasting marital union.

TABLE 3. INTRA-GENERATION MOBILITY: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MALE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS BY AGE AND OCCUPATIONAL GROUP, 30-59.

Age of Head:	30-39	40-49	50-59
Occupational Group (%):			
White collar	15	17	17
Skilled	35	25	24
Own account	7	15	12
Non-farm labourers	17	15	19
Peasant	5	10	11
Renters	9	13	6
Landless labourers	8	4	9
Domestics	4	1	1
Total	100 (149)	100 (214)	100 (161)

¹³Cumper, George E. "Report on Employment in Barbados," *op. cit.*

Some of the movements between occupational groups at later ages can be traced from Table 1, though because of the small numbers involved it is not possible to be sure of the significance of all the changes in occupational distribution with age. The data suggest a movement out of the skilled group into the own account group between the age groups 30-39 and 40-49. At this age many Barbadian construction workers pass from being regular wage earners to the more independent and precarious position of jobbing tradesmen and small sub-contractors. The data also suggest a shift with increasing age between the various categories of agricultural labourers. The proportion of peasant proprietors increases throughout; that of renters increases between the age groups 30-39 and 40-49; but falls back thereafter. The older agricultural worker seeks to get land of his own or, failing that, to rent land; and there is no doubt some tendency for the less efficient renters to be displaced and to become casual workers as their working ability declines with age, and as the income requirements of their families decline, which may explain the fall in their numbers in the fifties. There appear to be two main currents of intra-generation mobility. In the thirties and early forties (the ages of family formation) there is a tendency for the worker to shift toward occupations which offer greater income, often with more responsibility and less security; thereafter, as working efficiency declines and as children attain independence, there is a contrary but less marked tendency.

TABLE 4. OCCUPATIONAL GROUP OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS, OF PARENTS OF HEADS AND OF DEPENDANTS OF HEADS

Occupational Group of Parent	White Collar	Own A/c and skilled	Non-farm labourer	Agric. labourer	Domestic	Total
Occupational Group of Head of Household:						
White collar	94	59	16	11	13	192
Own Account and skilled	35	233	64	227	56	616
Non-farm labourer	3	78	59	106	28	272
Agric. labourer	—	93	31	560	29	714
Domestic	7	121	68	68	81	347
Total	139	584	238	972	207	2,141
Occupational Group of Dependant:						
Occupational Group of Head of Household:						
White collar	110	45	5	1	2	163
Own Account and skilled	47	225	29	48	38	387
Non-farm labourer	13	66	50	16	29	174
Agric. labourer	9	132	40	291	33	505
Domestic	12	56	33	19	38	158
Total	191	524	157	375	140	1,387

Two sets of data are available which throw some light on mobility between generations. The occupations of the heads of households in the sample may be compared with the reported occupations of their parents, or with the recorded occupations of the dependent members of their households (excluding

the resident domestics in certain white-collar households) (Table 4). For this purpose it is convenient to merge the occupational groups between which intra-generation mobility is known to occur, the skilled being merged with the own account group and the peasant with the renter and landless labourer groups. From these data it is possible to calculate certain ratios which we can use as coefficients of mobility. Certain of these (shown in parentheses in Table 3) we may call "in-group" coefficients. In deriving these we calculate first the percentage of dependants in a given occupational group derived from households whose head is of the same group (or of heads of households whose parents were in the same group). We then calculate what the percentage would have been had the dependants been derived from all occupational groups in proportion to their total numbers. The ratio of the actual to the expected percentage is then an expression of the tendency for members of an occupational group to be derived from households whose senior members belong to the same group. The second set of ratios, shown without parentheses in Table 5, we may call "out-group" coefficients. To obtain these, the cases in which a person in a given occupational group derives from a household in the same group are first excluded, and the percentage deriving from each of the remaining groups is compared with its corresponding chance percentage.

For example, from the first part of Table 4 it can be seen that 94 out of 193, or 48.7 per cent of all white-collar heads of households had parents in the white-collar group. But white-collar parents form only 139 out of 2,140, or 6.49 per cent of all parents, so that the in-group coefficient is $48.7/6.49$, or 7.5. Excluding this 48.7 per cent, 59 of the remaining 99 white-collar heads, or 59.6 per cent, had parents in the skilled group. But among the parents the skilled group accounted for 584 out of 2,002, or 29.2 per cent of all parents, excluding those in the white collar group. The out-group coefficient connecting white-collar heads and skilled parents is therefore $59.6/29.2$ or 2.0

TABLE 5. MOBILITY COEFFICIENTS RELATING OCCUPATIONAL GROUP OF HEAD AND PARENT, AND OF DEPENDANT AND HEAD

	White collar	Own A/c and skilled	Non- farm labourer	Agric. labourer	Domestic
Dependant:					
Head:					
White-collar	(7.5)	1.0	0.5	0.0	0.4
Own Account and skilled	2.1	(1.4)	1.2	1.2	1.5
Non-farm labourer	1.4	1.1	(2.0)	1.0	2.1
Agric. labourer	0.2	1.0	1.0	(1.7)	0.5
Domestic	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.1	(2.4)
Head:					
Parent:					
White-collar	(4.9)	0.9	0.4	0.1	0.2
Own Account and skilled	1.8	(1.5)	0.9	1.3	1.2
Non-farm labourer	1.1	1.3	(2.5)	1.0	2.0
Agric. labourer	0.3	0.9	0.9	(2.1)	0.8
Domestic	1.1	1.2	2.4	1.3	(2.4)

It will be seen from a comparison of the two parts of Table 5 that the patterns of coefficients derived from the two sets of data are very similar.

This tends to confirm the general reliability of the data and gives some assurance that they do throw light on the real pattern of occupational mobility in Barbados. Further, since the two sets refer to different time periods — the processes analyzed in the first presumably extending over about a generation back from the survey data, those of the second set referring to only a few years — they suggest that the direction of occupational mobility in Barbados has remained fairly constant over the last generation.

All the in-group coefficients are greater than unity, indicating that the members of a household tend to remain in the same occupational group from one generation to another. This is an expected result, but it also goes to confirm the usefulness of the occupational groupings as units for mobility analysis. The highest of these coefficients is that for the white collar group; those for non-farm labourers, agricultural labourers and domestics are all considerably lower (in the range 1.8-2.5), and the coefficient for the skilled and own account workers is lowest of all (1.4-1.5). It should be noted that although the group of agricultural labourers has a relatively low in-group coefficient it is nevertheless recruited to the extent of 78 per cent from households in the same group; on the basis of the percentage of members derived from the same group (without allowance for the size of the group) the white collar and agricultural labourers' households have a considerably higher rate of in-group recruitment than the rest.

The out-group coefficients are in every case less than the in-group coefficient for the corresponding column, indicating that there is no source of recruitment to any group from the others which compares in importance with the group itself. The coefficients suggest that the white-collar group is recruited preponderantly from the group of own account and skilled workers, and hardly at all from the agricultural labourers. The skilled-own account group is recruited indifferently from all groups. Non-farm labourers are recruited from the domestic group, from the agricultural labourers and from the own account and skilled workers. The agricultural labourers are drawn hardly at all from the white-collar group, but roughly equally from the rest. Finally, there is a particularly close connection between the domestic group and the non-farm labourers, with recruitment heavy in both directions.

It will be seen that the procedure used to derive Table 5 is similar to that used by Glass and others in their statistical study of social mobility in Britain (Glass, 1954) and depends on the same fundamental concept of random mobility. The main differences between our study and the British investigation can be summarized under two heads. First, the more abundant and more detailed data obtained in Britain made it worth while to consider certain factors such as the influence of class differentials in fertility which we have had to ignore. Secondly, the British study was organized round an occupational classification which was expressly intended to rank occupations in order of status, whereas we have avoided any ranking of occupation on the ground that the existence of a single status continuum has not been established for the West Indies.

Unless differences in occupational fertility levels are very marked or some other special cause intervenes, we should expect that random mobility would produce coefficients of unity. The coefficients of Table 5 diverge from unity in most cases, and it is desirable to test whether these divergences can be explained in terms of chance deviations arising from sampling variability. Table 6 shows the probability (in terms of significance levels) that any coefficient from Table 5 has arisen by chance in sampling from a population in which the true value is unity, as measured by the value of unadjusted X^2 for one degree of freedom.

TABLE 6. SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS FOR MOBILITY COEFFICIENTS.

	Occupational Group of Head:				
	White collar	Own a/c and skilled	Non-farm labourer	Agric. labourer	Domestic
Occupational Group of Parent:					
White-collar	xx	—	xx	xx	xx
Own a/c & skilled	xx	xx	—	xx	xx
Non-farm labourer	—	—	xx	—	xx
Agric. labourer	xx	—	—	xx	xx
Domestic	—	—	—	—	xx
	Occupational Group of Dependent:				
Occupational Group of Head:					
White-collar	xx	—	xx	xx	xx
Own a/c & skilled	xx	xx	—	x	—
Non-farm labourer	—	x	xx	—	xx
Agric. labourer	xx	x	—	xx	—
Domestic	—	—	xx	—	xx

xx significant at 1 per cent level

x significant at 5 per cent level

— not significant

The in-group coefficients are all significant at the 1 per cent level. Of the out-group coefficients (where the relevant hypothesis on our procedure is that mobility is random after allowance has been made for the group's tendency to self-recruitment), 6 out of 20 in the first part of the Table and 8 out of 20 in the second part are significant at the 5 per cent level or better. Without calculating a pooled X^2 it is clear that the deviations of the out-group coefficients from unity cannot be explained on the basis of sampling variability.

In any analysis of occupational mobility in Barbados the white-collar group must occupy a special position. As has been shown it is a group which is recruited preponderantly from within itself, but also receives significant numbers of recruits from the own account and skilled workers (by inter-generation mobility); on the other hand it contributes hardly at all to other groups. This implies that it is an expanding group. If we look at the process of recruitment from the reverse direction, we see that of all parents recorded with white-collar occupations, the children followed an occupation in the same group in 70 per cent of cases. It is a group in which incomes and status for

most members are higher than the average of any other group, and in a sense it may be regarded as the terminus of upward mobility within Barbados.

The main mechanisms by which the process of self-recruitment is maintained from generation to generation are obvious. The main qualification for the occupations in the group is some degree of formal education, plus those results of informal education which are summed up in such terms as "background". The high income level of the group gives it preferential access to formal education, and the continuity of the white-collar family facilitates the processes of informal education. The preference still generally given to "white" applicants for all but the poorest white-collar jobs works in the same direction.

But it must be borne in mind that there are important barriers to mobility within the group. To pass from an outside group into the poorest white collar occupations (policemen, messenger, attendant in a small shop) is easier than passing from this latter level to the professional group, and this in turn is easier than movement from the professional level into the small set of merchants and large planters whose positions confer the greatest income and power. No other group of those we have defined has so complex a structure, and it would have been desirable to subdivide it had this been practicable. Failing this, we must leave out of account the currents of mobility between the higher occupational sub-groups which, while quantitatively small, are crucial to understanding some aspects of Barbadian society and culture.

A distinctive position must also be given to the agricultural labourers. It is convenient to consider the peasant group as part of this larger group; the Barbadian "peasant proprietor" is usually a wage labourer with land, and would be called labourer rather than farmer in other West Indian societies. As we have seen, the rate of in-group recruitment among agricultural labourers is high, though because of the large absolute size of the group it also provides the greatest single contribution to the occupationally mobile population. The rate of geographical mobility is extremely low — in 1955 only 11 per cent of the male heads of households and 10 per cent of the female heads in this group were found outside their parish of birth which, given that the average Barbadian parish is only 16 square miles in area, shows a surprising degree of stability in the rural population. An important factor in maintaining occupational and geographical stability has been the labour system of the Barbadian plantation. Under this system the worker is attached to his job not merely by the immediate wage relation but by the custom of renting him a small plot of land on the plantation. This custom formed part of a legally sanctioned system (see, e.g. Starkey¹⁴) and the change of the legal basis for the "located labourer" relationship has not greatly weakened its effectiveness. Further, the ties between plantation and worker may be strengthened by loans to the worker secured on future earnings and by the plantation's purchase of the cane grown on the worker's plot. Besides these economic bonds, there are strong social bonds between planter and worker. In sum, therefore,

¹⁴Starkey, O. P. *Economic Geography of Barbados*, New York, 1939.

the workers who have established themselves as regular labourers under this system (roughly our group of renters) will be chary of changing jobs lest they lose the advantages of this complex relationship. Their children, in turn, will find it easy to begin working for the plantation — because they will have preference in the light work, such as grass picking and water carrying, which forms the easiest point of entry into the labour force — the household will find it advantageous that they should do so, since the more members of a family that work for the same plantation, the greater the claim of that family on the favour of the planter.

The white-collar group and the group of agricultural labourers are the most stable in Barbadian society. We have seen that there is little direct mobility between them. There is rather more likelihood of mobility through the mediation of the skilled and own account group, which is the main receiver of mobile individuals from among the agricultural labourers' households and the main source of outside recruitment for the white-collar group. It seems reasonable to regard movement from the agricultural labourer group to the skilled worker group (through apprenticeship) and from the skilled and own account group to the white-collar group (through secondary education) as "upward" mobility in the inter-generation sense, and to compare it with the intra-generational movement from the renters group to the peasant group and from the skilled group to the own account group. The two processes are related by the fact that the peasant group contributes more heavily to the skilled and own account group than do the rest of the labourers, and the own account workers contribute more heavily to the white collar group than do the skilled workers.

Census data show that over the last generation the proportion of white collar workers in the Barbadian labour force has increased and the proportion of agricultural labourers has decreased. It is probable, therefore, that upward occupational mobility has been greater than downward mobility. The data in Table 2 are not decisive evidence on this point because of certain biases inherent in the method of collection; in the first part of the Table, the occupational group of the head of the household has been assessed on the basis of a detailed work history over the year, while the group of the head's parents is simply that reported to the enumerator and may be incorrect; in the second part of the Table, the number of dependants in skilled jobs may be inflated by the inclusion of abortive apprenticeships. It is safe to say that "downward" mobility is quantitatively important, and that to each stream of upward mobility there corresponds a reverse downward flow. Thus while some children of skilled workers are successful in gaining enough education to enter the lower ranks of the white-collar group, some members of white collar households will lack the ability or the opportunity for sufficient formal education to keep them in the white-collar group and will be apprenticed to skilled trades. Downward mobility, in the sense in which we are using the phrase, has perhaps been increased of recent years by rising wage rates for unskilled workers and heavy unemployment among skilled workers.

In the processes of mobility the domestic group plays a peculiar part. The heads of the households in this group tend to be recruited to a disproportionate extent from the skilled own-account and non-farm labourer groups, and to contribute particularly to the recruitment of the latter group. These households are mainly headed by women (the number of men in domestic service is insignificant) and often result from the breaking of a marital union by which the woman is left with responsibility for children. It has been shown that in the groups from which these women are recruited it is relatively rare for a daughter's children to be accommodated within the parental family, so that the pressure on a woman in this situation to find work by which she can support her own household is strong. But in these groups, too, it is rare for a woman in a marital union to follow an occupation other than that of housewife. Hence the most easily available work in such a case is that of domestic servant. But servants will make great sacrifices to ensure that one, at least, of their children will be able, through apprenticeship or education, to re-enter the higher occupational groups. The child who cannot do this will at least avoid agricultural labour, which on the status scale of the domestics group appears to be the lowest group. In this way the occupational level of a family can be at least partly maintained in spite of a failure of household stability in one generation.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The grouping of households by broad occupational classes is an effective way of distinguishing variations in the pattern of household composition. In none of the groups is it possible to find a completely consistent system, but no other classification seems capable of attaining greater consistency.

The variations shown all fall within the range of household types which have been reported from elsewhere in the West Indies. Only one important type reported from other territories is not found in Barbados — the isolated estate worker described, for example, by Clarke for "Sugartown".¹⁵ The presence of this type in Jamaica is connected with the provision of "barracks" on the sugar estates in order to accommodate migrant workers who have come long distances to seek work. Such migrants are rare in Barbados; communications within the island are good and the migrant need never sever his connection with his home.

The range of variation is considerable. Part of it reflects the occupational classification we have used; by separating the households of domestics, for example, we have set up a group in which the majority of household heads must be women, and in the same way the majority of the households in the skilled group must be headed by men. But if we take a comparison which does not involve definitional difficulties of this kind — if we compare the white-collar group, for example, with the renter group — we find striking contrasts, some of which can be illustrated from the indices given in Table 2.

¹⁵Clarke, E., *op. cit.*

The groups cannot be placed on a single scale or classified by any single index, such as the importance of legal marriage. Those in which legal marriage has much the same incidence — the white-collar, skilled and peasant groups, or the own account and renter groups — differ considerably in other ways. The pattern of household composition in each group must be considered in its own right.

The complexity of the picture of household composition is simplified if we consider that the groups, separated for analysis, are in fact linked by the occupational mobility of their members. This is particularly clear in the case of the three groups of agricultural labourers, and it is worth considering the relation between them in detail.

How far should the three groups of peasants, renters and landless labourers be regarded as preserving their identity through time and what is the relation between them from a dynamic, rather than a static viewpoint? The answer set out below rests partly on casual observations of Barbadian society, partly on generalization from published work on other West Indian communities; but it appears to bring together the main facts into a consistent relation.

We assume that the role of the man at this level of society is generally accepted as involving the eventual headship of an independent household based on a conjugal relationship and leading to the rearing of children. This role may be fulfilled through a range of forms, culturally determined with more or less precision, and these forms have an economic as well as a social aspect. Some forms are considered as ideally preferable to others, and a certain degree of social disapproval attaches to the man who fails to adopt the preferred form at an appropriate age when his economic circumstances are consistent with it. The man who is unable to meet the minimum conditions for headship of a family will be involved in a number of the relationships which are ideally incorporated in the family, but they will not constitute an integrated whole with a firm institutional form.

The young man in a peasant family has three main paths to independence. He may hope to take over the family holding on the death or senescence of the head. The attractiveness and immediacy of this will depend on the particular circumstances of the family; but there will be many cases where this path involves many years of waiting, or considerable uncertainty about his share of the (usually small) holding, or both. Hence there will be many young men in their late 'teens or twenties who embark on one of the two other paths. One of these is a movement into a different occupational group — mainly that of the skilled workers. This by definition takes the worker out of the group with which we are at present concerned. The final path means that the young man relies on work outside the household and takes the shortest way to establish himself in a new household, as a step on the way to fulfilling his eventual role as head of a stable family. In certain contexts (e.g. the Caymanas area of Jamaica) a worker similarly circumstanced would be

found living alone in the "barrack" housing of an estate. In Barbados this type of free housing for single men is not provided, and the worker quits his parental family either to set up a common-law union in a separate house (rented, or built on rented land) or to attach himself to an existing household, as husband of the head or of one of her daughters. Since, as we have shown, the peasant families rarely harbour their married children or the spouses of these, this means that a large proportion of the sons of peasant families must move out of the group at the beginning of their adult life and attach themselves to households in the renter or, more often, the landless group.

The young men of the renter group have not the tie of family property to hold them to the parental household. The family's connection with the plantation may, it is true, make it easier for them to set up a similar connection and to rent land on which to erect a house. But they will be eligible for this at any time after their reaching adult efficiency as workers, provided they can raise the money to build or buy. Hence some will attempt to move to a non-agricultural job (though a less proportion, on our evidence, than in the other two groups); some (perhaps most) will set up common-law families; while others will attach themselves to families with women as heads in the renter or landless groups.

Hence while there will be a sufficient number of young men who are able to set up households on the basis of succession to a family holding or of the securing of a stable job carrying renting privileges to effect a certain continuity in the membership of the peasant and renter groups, a considerable proportion of men in the twenties and thirties stand at the foot of the ladder, their own household group still to be built.

The first step on the way to setting up an independent household is the acquisition of one's own house. Among men this minimum condition justifies a common-law marriage. Men may fail to meet this condition, and still enjoy a conjugal relationship as the lover or husband of a woman in a household with female head; this is permitted behaviour among young men with their way to make, and is by no means unknown among the old. Once the condition is met, a common-law household may be set up. Whether this is consolidated into a life-long union depends on a variety of circumstances. But one of these, at least, is the economic success of the male partner.

If he secures his own house spot, it is probable that he will set up a legal union, with his common-law wife or another; and if he is able to purchase or inherit cultivable land of his own, a legal union is almost inevitable. But this process of economic improvement takes time; so that while it is impossible to state unequivocally that common-law marriages belong to the younger, and legal marriages to the older age groups, there is a tendency for them to form successive stages in the worker's life history.

The situation is complicated by the fact that in Barbados, as in Jamaica, the use of the phrase "common-law" for all residential unions which are not

leg
tw
Ja
fo
lar
ma
ma
is
a s
Bu
of
the
Th
wo
to
Y
the
of i
mal
of
wor
is re
she
part
quan
age
almo
with
play
Th
the l
in th
age
in ou
rises
seen
off t
union
husb
break
any o
daugh
a wo

legal marriages tends to conceal differences in stability and formality between unions which are demographically similar. Clarke¹⁶ distinguishes in Jamaica a category of purposive concubinage, which may be initiated by a formal application from the man to the parents of the girl concerned. A similar form exists in Barbados, and stable unions undertaken in this way are in many respects closer to legal marriage than to casual matings, or to the matrilocal unions found in our landless group.

The ideal role of the woman in the households of the agricultural labourers is the complement of that of the man — the role of spouse and mother in a stable household headed by a husband who provides economic support. But the power of the woman to exercise an initiative toward the attainment of this ideal is extremely limited, by lack of economic opportunity and by the dependent nature of the role itself, except in the one item of motherhood. There is no doubt that in the particular circumstances of the Barbadian woman of the agricultural labourer group, a strong positive value attaches to motherhood, and it may be attained under a wide range of forms.

Young women in rural Barbados are seldom found living in isolation (as they are, for example, on some Jamaican plantations). Almost the only form of independence available to them is the inheritance of a house, unless they make the decisive migration to the town which frees them from the control of parents. Hence the first residential unions entered into by the young women in our sample fall into three classes: those in which the girl's partner is received into the household of her mother or both parents; those in which she joins the household of her partner's parents; and those in which her partner sets up a common-law household. The second class is never of great quantitative importance; the first and third are of greatest importance in the age group 20 - 29 and fall off with increasing age. From the thirties onward, almost all residential unions are accounted for by legal marriages — mainly with the man as head and house-owner, but sometimes with the woman playing this part.

The proportion of women who are household heads with no spouse of the head present is 4 per cent in the age group 20 - 29, jumps to 20 per cent in the next age group, and rises steadily thereafter to 60 per cent in the age group 60 and over. At the earlier ages such households are found mainly in our landless group, but the importance of the renter and peasant groups rises with increasing age of the household head. This distribution may be seen as a reflection of the stage at which residential unions have been broken off to give different types of female-headed household. Among the earliest unions will be those where the couple join the household of the parents of husband or wife. The former are likely to be the more unstable, and the breaking of a union throws the girl back on her mother's household, with any child of the union, thus producing a three generation parent-daughter-daughter's child household. Unions where the man joins the household of a woman as a dependent spouse, also occur early in the age distribution.

¹⁶Clarke, *op. cit.*

Their breakup will leave a household headed by a young woman, often with children, and probably with little property beyond the house itself — the so-called denuded family. (In such breakings-up of households the children follow the mother as a general rule.) Common-law unions with the man as head come next in the age sequence. These may break up in a number of ways and with various results; one possibility is that the couple may have acquired a house and property by their joint efforts, and the dissolution of the union then involves dividing this property. This will often leave an older woman with a house of her own in which to rear her growing children and eventually, perhaps, her daughter's children. Finally, long-enduring common-law and legal unions will eventually be broken by the death of one partner, and because of the age differential in marriage and the greater life expectancy of women it will usually be the man who dies first. The wife will then be left at a late age with a grown family and with inherited property to support her. Such widows are found in our renter and peasant groups, and need to be distinguished in discussion from the heads of "denuded" households which result from broken unions at earlier ages.

If this account of the situation among the agricultural labourers' households is correct, the processes of occupational mobility between the three groups we have distinguished, and the processes of household formation and dissolution, are connected in a close and rather complex way. It would be desirable to check this conclusion against the results of study of typical communities or areas in rural Barbados by more intensive techniques.

How far can we identify the distinction between legal and other unions with economic factors? In most West Indian societies, legal marriage is broadly associated with higher economic status, and in individual communities this association may take a more specific form — legal marriage may be linked with land ownership, or with sufficient household income to permit the wife to give up outside wage work. But the evidence of R. T. Smith¹⁷ for a community of agricultural workers in British Guiana, and our own evidence for the renter group in Barbados, would seem to suggest that there may be broad areas of a society within which direct correlations between economic status and household forms fail to hold — either because of variations in community *mores*, or because differences between economic levels are too small to outweigh differences in individual attitudes, or conceivably because in these cases the investigation has omitted important variables. In our case, for example, we find that there is no significant difference between the proportion of wives who are housewives in legal and in common-law households; and while the man who owns land almost invariably adopts the legal rather than the common-law type of union, there are many men among the renters legally married who are on our evidence no different in their economic circumstances from men in the same group who are found in common-law unions.

¹⁷Smith, R. T., *The Negro Family in British Guiana*, *op. cit.*

The general relation between economic factors and the form of the household and family in the West Indies deserves some consideration. There are a number of ways in which economic circumstances may influence the household. First, since the existence of the household as a group depends on its maintaining economic equilibrium with the rest of society, it is conceivable that economic circumstances may be so adverse that this primary condition cannot be fulfilled. If, for example, a man is chronically unemployed and unable to support the woman with whom he lives, he may desert her. If such behaviour is sufficiently widespread it may be taken up into the cultural pattern and influence not merely the individual household but the institution.

Second, economic circumstances may influence the distribution of roles within the household. So far as it is not culturally prescribed, this distribution reflects an equilibrium between the economic and other advantages of allocating the efforts of the members of the household among various uses. If, for example, a wife can earn a high income from wage work outside the household, a part of her role may be delegated to a domestic servant or to a dependent of the family.

Third, the household group may be identified with an economic enterprise. If the members of the household are active in operating the enterprise, their economic roles will interact with their familial roles; where the head of a household also directs its members in farm work, for example, his authority will be reinforced in both aspects. Even where not all members work in a household enterprise, the family will be subject to economic pressures to organise itself so as to maintain and transmit its property.

Fourthly, economic conditions for the setting and maintaining of a household, or of a certain type of household, may be culturally prescribed. These conditions may be in part a recognition of the necessary economic basis of the household in a particular context. The ideal of the household which seems to prevail in most West Indian peasant communities can be interpreted in this way: marriage should not take place without land and house; it should commit man and wife to certain roles; and it should be legalised in order to secure the succession to the land in the family. These conditions are well suited to a peasant community with adequate land available; when land is scarce, or when they are applied in a different economic context — to the urban worker, for example — they are irrelevant.

The cultural prescription of economic conditions for the household may be of considerable influence in the West Indies. We have suggested above that it may help in understanding the variations in household composition among Barbadian agricultural workers. But the cultural conditions for marriage among the white-collar group are equally strict, and may also influence the form of the family where they cannot be observed. The junior overseer housed on a plantation, for example, cannot easily set up house for a legal wife, and so often takes a common-law wife or sleeps with a casual partner.

Finally, economic mobility is closely linked with social mobility. For most households in the West Indies, the road to increased status is through a change of occupation by the head or through the establishment of the child in an occupation different from that of his parents. In either case, the head is likely directly or indirectly to gain added status within the household, since its mobility depends on him or her. Generally, it is the man's role which is reinforced in this way; but a woman may also improve the status of her household by successful trade, by white-collar work or by taking the responsibility for a child's higher education.

If we consider the skilled workers' households we can see how these general considerations apply to a particular case. In this group the average income is sufficiently high for the economic equilibrium of the household to be maintained, and stable and well organised households are the rule. Male earnings are much greater than those the wife can earn by outside work, and so it is advantageous for her to spend her time providing domestic services for the household. The household has little property to transmit, since it is not an economic enterprise; and so the stability of the household tends to be limited to the life of the husband. Regularity of employment and level of earnings are sufficient to allow the household to conform to the white-collar ideal of legal marriage and neolocal residence. Many of the men in this group are higher in the occupational scale than their parents, and many intend that their children shall rise higher still, so that the role of the man is reinforced by the increase of status he has provided or will provide.

A similar analysis could be applied to the other occupational groups we have dealt with above. But this case is sufficient to make it clear that while an analysis of the direct effects of economic circumstances can take us some way to understanding the form of household and family in the West Indies, it is necessary to give an important place to the interaction between the economic environment and the cultural prescription of the economic conditions for marriage and the household. In this latter field we have had to rely on some treacherous generalizations based on observation, on the literature on the West Indian family and on deduction from the observed pattern of household composition. It would be desirable to have the results of a direct study of Barbadian cultural patterns in so far as they concern the household.

APPENDIX

TABULATION OF DATA ON HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

The analysis of household composition is conducted in terms of seventeen categories of relation to the household head. These are:

- in the second descending generation, son's sons, son's daughters, daughter's sons and daughter's daughters;
- in the first descending generation, step-sons and step-daughters (i.e. spouse's children other than those for the head) and head's sons and daughters;

in the head's generation, brothers, sisters, spouses and heads (the head with spouse present in the household being shown separately from the head with no spouse present);

in the first ascendant generation, male ascendant relatives and female ascendant relatives;

a residual category including all other kin and non-kin found in the household, male and female shown separately.

Many white-collar households included a resident domestic servant; these servants have been excluded from the tabulation.

Four types of household are distinguished: those headed by a male with legal spouse present, with common-law spouse present and with no spouse present, and those with a female head. The phrase "common-law" is used here, as has become common in West Indian demography to indicate a union in which the partners cohabit without either legal or Christian ritual sanction, but the commoner Barbadian practice is to speak of a "reputed wife" or "reputed husband" rather than a common-law wife or husband. It should be noted that in Barbados the categories "legal" and "Christian" marriage are virtually identical, civil marriage without church rites being extremely rare. Further, since there are almost no East Indians in the island, the various forms of union associated with this group in other West Indian territories need not be considered.

TABLE 6. BARBADOS. HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION, 1955 SAMPLE

Age of Respondent Sex and Conjugal Condition of Head of Household	0-9						10-19						20-29						30-39					
	M			F			M			F			M			F			M			F		
	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S
Relation of Respondent to Head:																								
Son's son	6	2		19	27		1	1		7	9					3								
Son's daughter	8	3		15	26		1			5	6													
Daughter's son	58	7	59	124	9	1				40	50		1			1	15	19				1	1	2
Daughter's daughter	48	3	9	79	139	5			3	24	32		2	1	1	1	15	19				2	2	2
Stepson	3	7			10	17	9	1	1	1	28		6	1		1						1	1	2
Stepdaughter	3	11		1	15	16	15	3		34	34		7	2								2	2	4
Son	266	56	7	123	452	193	19	9	179	400	83		83		12	94	189				12	33	48	
Daughter	237	60	5	112	414	222	27	12	137	398	71	1	5	93	175	14						40	58	
Brother							1			8	11		1			3	4	8				2	6	8
Sister								2	2	10	14		2			8	4	14				2	7	11
Spouse								3			3		57	45				11	113		37	30	201	
Head (spouse present)										1	1		25	25		16	66				99	37	22	158
Head (no spouse present)									1	2	3				13	28	41				12	84	96	
Ascendant generation																								
M.	16	8	11	48	83	10	1	3	25	39	18		18		4	25	47		7	2	8	20	37	
F.	15	5	9	44	73	19	3	5	40	67	18	2	9	34	63				10	1	3	22	36	
Others																								
Total: Males	349	73	25	250	697	231	31	16	260	538	136	26	33	153	348	119	39	26	91	275				
Females	311	82	23	251	667	263	50	25	219	557	158	51	24	195	428	162	38	9	179	388				
Both Sexes	660	155	48	501	1,364	494	81	41	479	1,095	294	77	57	348	776	281	77	35	270	663				

TABLE 6 Cont.

Age of Respondent Sex and Conjugal Condition of Head of Household	40-49						50-59						60 and over						Total		
	M			F			M			F			M			F			M		
	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S	LM	CL	S
Relation of Respondent to Head:																					
Son's son																7	3		7	3	
Son's daughter																10	3	1	10	3	1
Daughter's son																70	1	9	71	1	9
Daughter's daughter																55	4	13	55	4	13
Stepson																27	17	1	27	17	1
Stepdaughter																28	28	3	28	28	3
Son	2			2	12	16										556	75	33	441	1,105	
Daughter	4			2	19	25										548	88	30	410	1,076	
Brother	1			2	1	4										3			3		
Sister				5	4	9										4			2		
Spouse	133	20		14	167	79	6			15	100	37				52	4		15	71	457
Head (spouse present)	142	31		20	193	113	13			17	143	76				9			9	94	457
Head (no spouse present)				37	114	151	35			111	146					28	175	203	9	94	457
Ascendant generation																2	1		1	4	
Others	2			4	6	11	1			3	11	14				3	18	36	20	2	
																1			1		
	3	1		9	13	1	1			5	9	7				55	11	27	12	32	
	6			7	14	2	1			1	5	9				77	12	32	77	12	32
Total: Males	148	32	41	37	258	115	13	35	16	179	78	10	29	17	134	1,176	224	205	824	2,429	
Females	145	20	8	168	341	85	8	10	143	246	73	5	7	22	307	1,197	254	106	1,377	2,934	
Both Sexes	293	52	49	205	599	200	21	45	159	425	151	15	36	239	441	2,373	478	311	2,201	5,363	

CONJUGAL CONDITION: LM = Legal Marriage (Ever married)
CL = Common-law Marriage
S = Single

The Family System of Jamaica

By

WILLIAM DAVENPORT

From the period of slavery through Emancipation and up to the present, interest in the Jamaican Negro family has been high; there is now a body of literature on the subject greater than that for any other Caribbean island society. This interest has not always been sociological however. Rather it was stimulated by various conditions found in the lower-class family system that offended middle- and upper-class sensibilities. These conditions, obviously, refer to deviations from the prescribed Christian patterns of marriage, sexual relations, and faithful monogamy. As viewed through a screen of Euro-American middle and upper-class values, these deviant patterns have been interpreted as degenerate or broken-down forms of the accepted norms. Some writers have liberally mixed this view with problems of race, colour, and the legacy of slavery, while others, attempting to avoid these evaluative pitfalls, have approached it from the point of view of a Negro or social class subculture which has different historical origins. The fact remains that Jamaican society is a single society, containing within it family patterns and legal norms which are of English derivation, as well as common-law patterns which have evolved locally, and these differences are highly correlated with variations in colour and social class. These differing patterns are not mutually exclusive or discrete, but blend into one another by a gradual transition, making typologies both difficult and misleading.

To complicate the situation further, there are in Jamaica large ethnic groups (e.g., Chinese and East Indian) whose family systems are again different; these, however, are outside the scope of this paper.

Although it is acknowledged that an analysis of the Jamaican family system should proceed from a holistic view of the society — a perspective from which variations in the family would be seen in relationship to variations in the total social system — this cannot be done here. This regrettable limitation is enforced by limitations in the descriptive data on Jamaica, for nearly all of the detailed studies concentrate on the lower class alone. This bias will be perpetuated here, and furthermore, it will be assumed that the middle- and upper-class family systems are homogeneous, and indistinguishable from those of comparable class strata in England and the United States. This assumption is supported by Henriques,¹ the only writer to attempt an analysis of the Jamaican family in terms of social class. We must also assume that intuitive judgments of social position are reliable, for no comprehensive

¹Henriques, Fernando. *Family and Colour in Jamaica*, Eyre and Spottiswood, London, 1953.

study of the indices and determinants of social class has been made. Ellis' work² is a valuable beginning, but his study of Christiana fails to include the lower range of the stratification hierarchy, which is precisely the segment which has commanded the most attention with regard to the family.

The main body of descriptive data on the Jamaican family comes from Simey's pioneer study³ which is based upon a sample of families from seven widely separated rural districts; Henriques' work based upon census data and field observations in the parish of Portland; a community study of a mountain settlement called "Rocky Roads" by Cohen;⁴ brief field studies of two coastal villages called "Mangrove Beach" and "Black Point" in the parishes of Clarendon and Westmoreland;⁵ Cumper's meticulous study of sampled census data from Porter's Mountain in Westmoreland and the Caymanas Estate⁶ (see also Smith⁷); and the most detailed field studies of all, a comparison of three communities called "Sugartown," "Mocca," and "Orange Grove" by Kerr⁸ and Clarke⁹. Information for the analysis to follow will be taken from all these sources, but mainly from Clarke¹⁰ and this writer's own field studies,¹¹ and unless otherwise noted, it will be from the latter.

The most tangible aspect of the family is the household, and being physically discrete, it can be dissected, analyzed, and compared with considerable precision. Yet the household is a complicated group, responding structurally to a number of less tangible systems, no one of which will account for all the variance to be found in one society. For this reason, we will proceed with separate analyses of the systems which have the most immediate effect on the household, in an effort to expose the principles of organization. The

²Ellis, Robert A. "Social Status and Social Distance," *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol. 40, 1956, pp. 240-246. "Colour and Class in a Jamaican Market Town," *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol. 41, 1957, pp. 354-360.

³Simey, T. S. *Welfare Planning in the West Indies*, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1946.

⁴"The Social Organization of a Selected Community in Jamaica," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 4, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1954, 104-133. "Character Formation and Social Structure in a Jamaican Community," *Psychiatry*, 18, 1955, pp. 275-296. "A Contribution to the Study of Adolescence: 'Adolescent Conflict' in a Jamaican Community," *Samiska*, Vol. 9, 1955, pp. 139-172. "Structure and Function: Family Organization and Socialization in a Jamaican Community," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 58, 1956, pp. 664-686.

⁵Davenport, William. A *Comparative Study of Two Jamaican Fishing Communities*, (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, Yale University, New Haven, Conn., 1956).

⁶"The Jamaican Family: Village and Estate," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1. University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1958, 76-108.

⁷"Family Structure and Plantation Systems in the New World" (Mimeographed paper read at the Seminar on Plantation Systems in the New World, San Juan, Puerto Rico, Nov. 17-23, 1957).

⁸*Personality and Conflict in Jamaica*, University of Liverpool Press, Liverpool, 1952.

⁹"Land Tenure and the Family in Four Jamaican Communities," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4. University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1953, pp. 81-118. *My Mother Who Fathered Me*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1957.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹Davenport, *op. cit.*

fundamental feature of the household is its organization according to the principles of kinship. Of equal significance are the influences which the patterns of sexual behaviour, marriage, and reproduction exert on it. Thirdly, it is a group within which the labour and skills of its members are interdependently organized for production, for consumption, and for maintaining itself a relatively independent social unit. Finally it is a social group which changes over time, and in some instances it has direct continuity beyond the life span of its members.

Kinship.

The Jamaican kinship system is based on what may be called kindred organization. That is, every individual is surrounded by a set of consanguines who have some mutual rights, obligations, and responsibilities toward him. Unlike the lineage, this set of kin is reckoned bilaterally, and its relationship to this common relative (and his siblings) is the only thing all members have in common with each other. Thus, the kindred is not a corporate kin group of any kind, and there are as many kindred groups in a society as there are sets of siblings. Half of an individual's kindred is made up of his mother's kin, and half is made up of his father's kin, while only full siblings have identical kindreds.

In Jamaica the range of consanguinity is supposed to include all known kin of either sex, reckoned in any way. This inclusive span is generally referred to by lower-class persons as "family". "My family" and "he is some family to me" are phrases which signify consanguinity. Genealogies will reveal, however, that the effective range of consanguinity is quite narrow, and people can rarely trace their collateral kin ties accurately farther than the children of first cousins, i.e., to "second cousins." Beyond this range only the knowledge that there is some relationship is retained, and after a few generations even this is lost. Parents, parents' siblings, first cousins, children, siblings' children (both sexes referred to as "niece"), and grandchildren form a hard core of close kin that is sometimes described as "near family," in order to distinguish it from more distant relatives, called "far family." A person's kindred, then will be defined as his near family, plus any other kin with whom he may have special relationships.

The behaviour and sentiment that is supposed to exist between an individual and his kindred members should be friendly, co-operative, and "loving". It is always reciprocal, and is generally felt to increase with closeness of relationship and decrease slightly with collateral distance. Although many arguments and disputes arise between kindred members, these are almost always settled or quieted without recourse to the police or the law. This is in sharp contrast to the readiness with which Jamaicans carry these conflicts to these agencies when it involves distant kin or non-kin. When kindred members live close to each other, there will be constant exchanges of assistance and favours of a quite different sort than between unrelated but

frien
close
betw
Se
erall
Gene
distr
and
Othe
chest
bad,
Black
prefe
secon

Wi
ling,
separ
nant
intens
ation
of ev
ambiv
in the
except
less o
Unite
illegit
tween
tween
prolon
due to
other
mon t
only t
their
that t
child
as the
are co
ated f
Betw
strong
sex, a
sibling

friendly neighbours. Some persons are so kin-oriented as to believe that close friendship should be maintained only between close relatives, never between unrelated persons.

Sexual relationships between a person and anyone of his kindred are generally considered to be incestuous, but there is some local variation in this. Genealogies of some people living at Mangrove Beach who came from a district in St. Elizabeth parish contained many children of first-cousin unions, and these were considered to be neither incestuous nor particularly close. Other people living in the same village who came from a district in Manchester felt that sexual relations between kin of any degree whatsoever were bad, and their genealogies confirmed their abhorrence of close unions. At Black Point, the feeling was that first cousin mating was too close, but the preferred spouse was a person who was far family, i.e., someone beyond the second-cousin range.

Within the nuclear relationships of parents to children and sibling to sibling, the most striking is that between the mother and child. Unless they are separated by some unavoidable circumstance, the mother remains the dominant figure in the child's life until adolescence. Even in later life, this long, intense emotional and physical dependence is expressed by an overt adulation and idealization of the mother, although there is a respectable amount of evidence to suggest the presence of an underlying pattern of unconscious ambivalence of high intensity. The father is of equal structural significance in the kinship system, and every child bears the surname of its father — except when there is some reason to hide the identity of the father — regardless of the marital status of the mother and father. This differs from the United States, or Great Britain, where children who are jurally defined as illegitimate do not carry their fathers' names. The affective relationship between father and child, however, is rarely as positive or as intense as between the mother and child. This is partly due to the more direct and more prolonged nature of the services she performs for her children, and partly due to the fact that father and child are frequently separated from each other upon the break-up of the parents' common-law union. It is not uncommon to find persons, for example, who have never seen their fathers or have only the most casual acquaintance with them. Still, one finds fathers and their children who have a very intimate and devoted relationship, revealing that there is nothing in the kinship system, as such, that weakens the father-child dyad. Yet the mother-child relationship is the all-important one as far as the Jamaican household is concerned, for the mother and her children are considered to be almost inseparable; in contrast, the father may be separated from his children if the situation demands it.

Between siblings the overt, affective relationships are both positive and strong. From childhood this feeling intensifies between siblings of the same sex, as they internalize the incest taboo and adopt more restraint toward siblings of the opposite sex, and as they learn their respective sex-typed

roles. An elder sister may be idealized in much the same way as the mother, since young girls are charged with much of the care of their younger brothers and sisters just as soon as they are capable of assuming these responsibilities. Perhaps the best way to describe the ideal sibling relationship is by the word "sharing". Youngsters are taught at an early age to share almost everything they receive with their brothers and sisters, and a great deal of this carries over into adult life. This model of sibling affection cuts across half-sibling lines with little diminution, for both half- and full-siblings are usually reared together under the care and supervision of their common mother, and they are held together by their enduring affection and obligation toward her.

The importance of the sibling relationship in habitual thinking is expressed in several ways. Close, non-sexual friendships with non-kins are always described in terms of sibling roles, and the intensity of such friendships is frequently expressed in how close they approximate each other. Genealogical relationships of collateral relatives are always described by their connecting sibling relationship; for example, a distant cousin might be described as "my grandfather and his grandfather were brothers", or a second cousin as "my father and his grandmother were brother and sister".

Structurally, however, half- and full-siblings are not alike, for only full-siblings share identical kindreds, and by this, the same sets of reciprocal kinship ties. This structural difference is further marked in some instances by the fact that some of the sibling group may be legitimate and some illegitimate, or "outside," as it is termed in Jamaica. The differences here will be discussed further in connection with marriage and the household itself.

The structural difference between half- and full-brothers and sisters is both reflected and masked by kinship terminology. Both half- and full-siblings refer to each other as "brother" and "sister" without distinction. If the half relationship is to be expressed, it will be done so by mentioning which parent they share, e.g., "same mother" or "same father". On the other hand, a spouse will never refer to his spouse's children by another person as his children or even as his stepchildren. A stepchild is of no consanguine relationship, and there is no term for him in the lower-class terminology. This failure to recognize affinal or conjugal relationships in the kinship terminology is also to be noted in the terms "aunt" and "uncle", which refer only to siblings of biological parents, and not to their spouses. If these are to be designated, the terms "aunt-in-law" and "uncle-in-law" might be used, but informants disagree as whether or not these are really kinship terms. While there is no term for stepchild, a step-parent may be called "mother-in-law" or "father-in-law." As one informant put it, "in-law" means "coming in." But the point of reference here is usually the household and not the kindred. That is, a father-in-law is a man who is living with one's mother, it being understood that one is usually living in the same house as one's mother. The term "mother-in-law" can be used for the woman one's father is living with, but more commonly, it refers to the mother of one's spouse.

When informants are asked whether they have different feelings toward their mothers' and fathers' kin (i.e., different halves of their kindreds), a preference for the mothers' is usually stated. But most of these same informants are quick to explain that this is because they have had more to do with them and know them better, while those who know both equally well show little such preference. All agree, however, that in sexual restrictions and other jural relationships there is no difference between these kin. This is mentioned only to emphasize the bilaterality of the structure, despite the fact of the mother's dominant role in socialization and the effective importance her kin may possess.

In summary, the strong, positive feeling toward close kin, the bilateral structure of the kindred, the cohesiveness of the mother-child relationship in contrast with the divisibility that may obtain between a father and his child, and the equality and solidarity between siblings are the important parameters of kinship in the organization of the lower-class household.

Sexual and Marital Relations.

Marriage in Jamaica, duly consummated and fully recognized by Church and state, differs in no essential way from marriage in England and the United States. But, as mentioned above, legally recognized marriage, though characteristic of upper socio-economic strata, is not the only form of conjugal relationship to be found in the lower class. While all groups and strata recognize the institution of legal marriage as desirable, in some ways at least, there are significant differences between the lower and upper classes in the kinds and effectiveness of the social sanctions which reinforce and maintain it. In the middle- and upper-class strata, the norms of sexual behaviour, parenthood, and co-residence of spouses are such that they channel people into marriage, and Jamaican law assumes that the attractions of these are sufficiently strong to lead most adults into the accepted forms. Hence the law prescribes only the conditions under which the marital contract shall be concluded, upheld, and dissolved, leaving the decision to enter into such a contract up to the decisions of the individuals concerned. All polygamous forms of marriage are prohibited by law, but between this specific limitation and the regular, approved forms of Christian marriage, there is a permissible range of conjugal relationship which is neither illegal nor recognized by the law. These variations will be called common-law and non-legal marriage.

Typologies of lower-class marriages have been offered by Simey,¹² Henriques,¹³ and Clarke,¹⁴ but these will not be followed too closely, for in some cases they do not underscore the important social relationships of which they are but a part. The paragraphs to follow are an attempt to show how these variations in marriage are to be seen as subcultural responses to dif-

¹²*op. cit.*, 1946, pp. 18-23.

¹³*op. cit.*, 1953, pp. 105-106.

¹⁴*op. cit.*, 1957, pp. 77-80.

ferent structural relationships within the Jamaican social system, while at the same time, they respect the norms and laws that govern legal marriage.

Both middle- and lower-class subcultures apply a "double standard" of expectancies to sexual behaviour, which allows the men more freedom in these matters than women. Lower-class socialization and adult sanctions, however, prove to be quite ineffectual in maintaining the chastity of young women past sexual maturity. Kerr¹⁵ and Clarke¹⁶ both bring out this point, and data from Mangrove Beach and Black Point fully corroborate their findings. The lower-class attitude toward pregnancy and motherhood is that they are more or less inevitable, regardless of marital status; but in the middle-class view, they are inextricably associated with marriage, and co-residence of husband and wife. The lower-class mother most frequently has her first child while still residing in her parental household and before she has concluded any kind of heterosexual relationship that will lead to legal marriage. She suffers little more than a formalized upbraiding from her mother for the trouble and expense it incurs, and there is little or no moral feeling about the matter. Such an event would be little short of catastrophic in middle-class society, and when a pregnancy does occur before marriage, all efforts are directed toward getting the couple quickly married so as to prevent an illegitimate birth.

Even though considerable freedom in sexual relations is allowed by lower-class norms, the partners expect each other to be faithful, and persistent infidelity inevitably leads to a break-up of the relationship. Lower-class sexual affairs, beginning as they do in experimentation and graduating into a series of relationships of varying permanence and from which a number of children are born, do not inevitably lead to marriage, as they seem to in the middle class when they occur. They are to be regarded as non-legal unions, with and without the common co-residence of the partners, and they are not the functional or the subcultural equivalent of legal marriage. For this reason, the people do not even call them "marriages", which term is reserved for true legal marriage. There is actually no single term for such unions and they are variously referred to as "living a sweetheart life" or, infrequently, as "common-law marriage". Nor do the partner, even of the most long-lasting non-legal unions, call each other "husband" and "wife", which signify the status of legally married persons. Only the terms "boy friend", "girl friend", and "sweetheart" are used to designate a common-law marital partner.

Married persons, and particularly the wife, are accorded more respectability than are persons living in common-law. Married women are always referred to or addressed as "Mistress So and So", a distinction a common-law wife never receives. Few women, indeed, do not regard legal marriage with a suitable man as superior to any non-legal arrangement, even though men are quite often not so enthusiastic. A few, even, are quite vocal in their

¹⁵*op. cit.*, 1952, p. 44.

¹⁶*op. cit.*, 1957, pp. 90-96.

condemnation of the whole marriage system, but these same men are generally desirous of seeing their daughters legally married someday. This association of marital respectability with women more than with men is but part of the double standard of sexual behaviour and is related to the general feeling in the Anglo-American tradition that women are the real bearers of the proprieties of the culture.

Just as lower-class values charge marriage with a high degree of respectability, so, too, they assess it primarily as a religious institution. A marriage is really not a proper marriage unless it is concluded in a religious setting. As Clarke¹⁷ also notes, lower-class persons are not always aware of the fact that by law a marriage can be performed only by an authorized marriage officer, and that many religious sect leaders who perform them are not so authorized. In any case, civil ceremonies are rarely performed in rural districts, even though this is the least troublesome and least expensive of marriage ceremonies.

Legal marriage, in contrast with non-legal, is regarded as practically indissoluble. This is due partly to ignorance of the divorce laws, partly to the costs and legal difficulties in obtaining divorce, and partly to the strong religious associations. When this great respect for the permanence of the marital status is coupled with anxieties over the responsibilities toward a wife and one's legitimate children, the positive attractions of respectability are easily outweighed. And since there is no real stigma attached to common-law marriage, the latter can and does remain both appealing and popular in the lower class.

The genuine respect for legal marriage that is held by lower-class persons, despite the high frequency of non-legal marriage, is revealed by the severity of disdain that is heaped upon persons who violate the norms of regular marriage. A deserter in marriage is just as much a deserter, and an adulterer in marriage is just as much an adulterer by lower-class norms, and perhaps even more so, as he is by middle and upper-class standards. But this applies only to legally married persons, and the same behaviour with respect to non-legal unions is not nearly so negatively viewed, and this is also the way it is regarded by law. Many lower-class persons become very indignant at the seemingly flippant attitudes toward the sanctity of marriage which many persons of higher social status seem to have. On the other hand, unsophisticated middle- and upper-class persons remain in a perpetual state of indignation at what seems to them to be promiscuity and a hypocritical tolerance of common-law marriage in the lower class.

Nearly all aspects of non-legal marriage are more variable than in legal marriage. For instance, in some quite stable common-law unions, to which several children have been born, the spouses do not share a common residence at all. Rather, the man visits his girl friend daily, takes some of his meals with her, and occasionally sleeps in her house, but still participates

¹⁷*Op. cit.*, 1957, 76.

fully in his own household of which she is no part, while their children may spend part of their time in both households. This somewhat anomalous form of residence is in no way considered either inappropriate or odd, and, in fact, accounted for nearly 20 per cent of the common-law unions at Black Point, where most marital unions of all kinds took place between members of that single community. Such an arrangement would be viewed as somewhat odd, however, if the couple were legally married. The termination of a non-legal union is also quite arbitrary and may be permanent; or it may be only a change from co-residence of the partners to intermittent co-residence or some kind of divided residences as described above. But in all cases these decisions are left up to the partners themselves, with kin and society either indifferent or unable to influence greatly the outcome. With regard to property, a common-law union is regarded as having little or no communal property held jointly between husband and wife, or held in the name of either for both partners. When the relationship is terminated, each person is supposed to take what belongs to him, but there are frequent and bitter disputes as to who actually owns what, and in these situations, relatives and friends are likely to become involved.

As already mentioned, despite the attempts of mothers to keep their daughters chaste, at the onset of sexual maturity nearly all lower-class girls have affairs. These are usually with young men of their same age set, but not infrequently a young girl's introduction to sex is by a considerably older man. The mean age of young women at first intercourse at Mangrove Beach and Black Point is 16.6 years, and for young men, about a year later. Young men of this age who have attended school are beginning to look for work, and their parents, especially when poor, are very anxious to see them working, so that they may begin to contribute something toward their own support. Work, needless to say, is nearly always scarce, and many who could be used on their own family property wish to find something more remunerative and interesting. New interests in young women, strong desires to look and dress well, and the attractiveness of participating in adult recreations all increase the need for money, which their parents cannot usually provide. For these young men, this is the beginning of a period of great ambiguity and instability, for they are physically adult, psychologically ready to become independent from their households of orientation, yet unable to find interesting or steady employment which would enable them to begin adult life. During these years, young men and women make and break their sexual alliances easily in what is really a period of sexual experimentation. Sooner or later the young woman becomes pregnant, and the young man responsible is either unable or unwilling to do much about it. Besides, there are many things he wishes to do for himself, and the last thing he wants in life is to settle down to supporting a woman and child. Sometimes a pregnancy of this sort will precipitate a marriage, legal or common law, but usually the birth is more or less ignored as much as possible by everyone. Neither Ja-

maica
marry
of his
influe
of ec
societ
omica
of th
abilit
tende

The
(Mar
differ
cours
their
they
enter
reside
and
dence
union
birth

Aft
the b
This
come
howe
the c
law
such

T

First
Second
Third

spous
Com
of pr
incre
W
both
steps

maican lower-class norms nor the law compel the young father either to marry or to establish a permanent common-law relationship with the mother of his child. It leaves this choice up to the couple, and this is considerably influenced by the degree to which the young man has achieved a measure of economic independence and security. The customary expectations of society, and also the law when it is called upon, do hold the father economically responsible, in part at least, for the cost of the birth and for part of the maintenance of his child, but these are realistically related to the ability of the father to provide such support, and the responsibility is not extended to his kin.

The mean age of women and men at the time of birth of their first child (Mangrove Beach and Black Point) is nineteen and twenty-four years. The difference between this age differential and that at the time of first intercourse (one year) is indicative of the fact that young women very soon cast their attentions in the direction of somewhat older men, mainly because only they have enough independence and money to provide the favours and entertainment expected of a lover. The percentage of mothers who never co-resided with the fathers of their first child is 48 (Mangrove Beach and Black Point), and this figure falls with each successive child. Co-residence, as already mentioned, is not a reliable index of a stable non-legal union, so the number of these either associated with or precipitated by the birth of the first child is probably greater than this figure.

After the initial period of sexual experimentation, and particularly after the birth of the first child, conjugal unions tend to persist for longer periods. This is not to say that early relationships, or even initial affairs, never become permanent or life-long, for occasionally they do. The general tendency, however, is for each successive non-legal union to become more stable than the one before. Table 1 summarizes the length of co-residential, common-law marriages for men at Mangrove Beach who had had more than three such relationships. Again, the bias introduced by using co-residence of

TABLE 1. DURATION OF CO-RESIDENCE WITH SPOUSE FOR MALES IN SUCCESSIVE COMMON LAW MARRIAGES (MANGROVE BEACH).

	Mean duration in months	Range in months
First	36	2 - 156
Second	59	12 - 144
Third	96	12 - 324

spouses as an index of common-law marriage must be taken into account. Common-law marriages will also show increasing stability with the number of previous unions, the number of children born to either partner, and with increasing age of either partner.

When a common-law union appears to have become stable, that is, when both partners are confident that their relationship will endure, they take steps to legalize it by marriage. The optimism and pressure for marriage is

nearly always greater with the woman. This is to be expected, in the light of the way women are regarded as the carriers of respectability, but it is also the result of constant pressures put on the women by the clergy, social workers, and judges (if the women have had occasion to go to court) — middle and upper class all — to legitimize their children and their own status by marriage. The most pervasive of these pressures emanates from the local church, and these are most effective, since a great many local activities revolve about them. Churches usually do not permit any woman living in common law to become a full member or to hold any church office, although no one is denied admittance to services for this reason. In the same vein, no Jamaican child is denied the rite of baptism, and all mothers hold this to be an important religious ceremony; but illegitimate children sometimes must be baptized on different days from legitimate children, and the mothers are there reminded of the sin they are perpetuating by living in common law.

There is a real difference between the domestic statuses and roles of married and unmarried women living in common-law marriages (see Clarke¹⁸). In the latter instance, a woman can make no strong claim for support, her partner's property is considered to be his own, and she is usually more or less obliged to seek employment for part of her own support. What is more important, she has no recourse in these matters to the courts of law, and there are no sanctions to prevent her spouse from terminating the arrangement at any time he wishes. The reverse is, of course, also true. In marriage, however, the husband is legally considered to be head of his household of which his wife is a part, and he is expected to provide for household dependents, of which his wife is one, in a satisfactory and selfless manner. The legally married wife may work or perform remunerative services in order to augment her husband's income, but ideally, at least, she should not be compelled to do so. These expectations assume that the husband is economically able to fulfill these obligations, and that society has a secure niche for him, which only needs to be occupied by him. Therefore, while the probability that a stable non-legal union will be legalized by marriage increases with the number of children each parent has and with their age (see Tables 2 and 3), these are not really the crucial factors. Economic security and a willingness to enter into the life-long obligations of legal marriage are what are important. If a man does not feel secure, or if he thinks the legal hold his wife gains on him through marriage will alter their relationship, then he will, indeed, be unwilling to go through with the wedding. On the other hand, if through the stabilization process, the husband's and wife's roles have become what is expected of legally married couples, then, with a little pressure, the man is usually ready to get married. Thus, the sequence of successive non-legal unions leading up to legal marriage can be looked at in at least two ways: it is a process by which the jural obligations of marriage

¹⁸*op. cit.*, 1957, pp. 77-80, 104-109.

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN BEFORE LEGAL MARRIAGE.

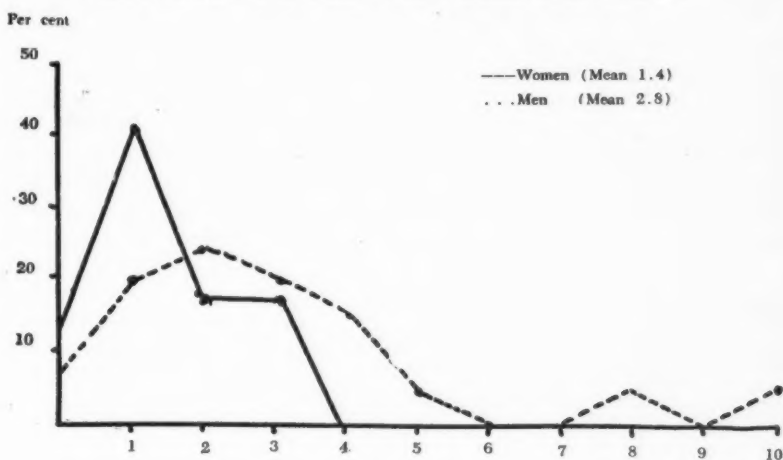
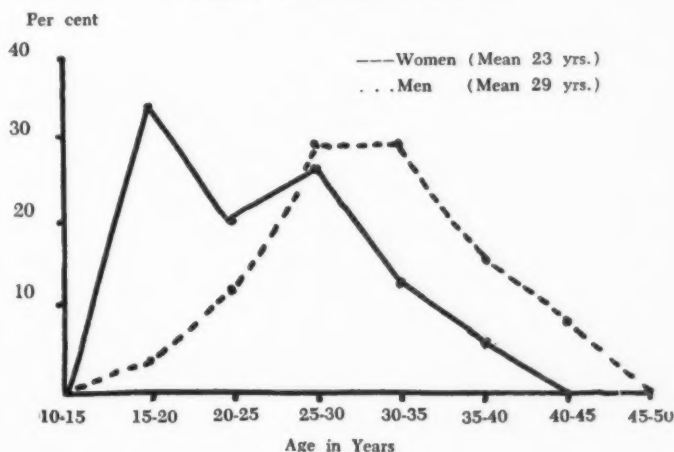


TABLE 3. AGE AT LEGAL MARRIAGE.



may be postponed, without foregoing more or less normal procreative activities, until full economic security is achieved; and it is a period during which both men and women are working, through trial and error, toward the perfection of adult marital roles. When both of these are achieved, then the marriage is legalized, and the partners become fully respectable, adult members of the society. In either case, the period immediately following sexual maturity or late adolescence is one of great instability for both sexes. Most lower-class Jamaicans ultimately manage to overcome it and find a secure

place in the system, but this is not inevitable. Some go through the remainder of their lives in economic want and without marital stability of any kind. And there are a few who, even though they achieve both economic and marital stability, fail to legalize their marriages ever.

The instability of the post-adolescent period is increased somewhat by the marked difference between men of different age groups. This becomes particularly noticeable after the age of fourteen or fifteen. Before this boys of all ages interact quite freely, far more so than in United States society, where an age difference of even a year or so is very important to pre-adolescents. After fifteen or so, young men begin to avoid their elders and to be quite deferential to them when they are together. Among these young adult men, there is a strong tendency to associate with each other and to get away from all other age groups. After about age twenty-two years or so, some continue to remain in this detached group of young men, while others return to an ever-increasing equality with the older men. This was quite noticeable among the Black Point fishermen, where some men of eighteen and nineteen were already full-time fishermen with complete economic autonomy. Yet at meetings of the Fishermen's Co-operative Society, some were completely silent before their elders, while some others ventured an independent opinion only once in a while. This variation was found to be correlated with the degree of separation from their parental households. Those who still lived in their household of orientation felt they had no voice in current affairs, while those who were out on their own and managing their own domestic establishment would state an opinion, even though they remained respectful of the older men.

From these and other observations, it is inferred that full adult status is not a factor of age alone, but is achieved through a combination of age, economic security, and independence from the household of orientation. The more significant here are the social and economic factors, for they, unlike age, are not come by automatically. Only socio-economic security enables a man to head his own household group and to achieve a stable marriage. As long as this is thwarted, he will be unwilling to enter into the permanent jural obligations of legal marriage, and he remains in a relatively ambiguous and unstable position in society. And if he remains in this position but still has children, then some of his obligations as husband and head of household must be assumed by other persons. Who these persons are and how this transfer takes place will be discussed below.

All the children born from these successive non-legal unions, though technically illegitimate, are nonetheless considered to be the children of their biological fathers. And although these outside children most often remain with their mothers, their fathers are expected to contribute something toward their support. Most men recognize these obligations and try to give something when they are able. This most often takes the form of intermittent sums of money for clothing, which are given before the major holidays when

ever
this
hou
are
hou
wor
assu
son,
a w
if th
ofte
and
to c
anal
is ve
W
lega
of th
husb
betw
enou
use t
intro
must
stand
the c
pone
care
Ap
the c
of th
reject
and t
hence
image
Un
comp
termin
ticular
to ins
that h
howev
and th
19Be
of Nort
20op.
21op.
22op.

everybody wants to dress their best. Some men are completely remiss in this, and the full weight of support of their children falls upon the household where the mothers of their children are residing. In some cases these are their own households of orientation. In others, a woman resides in the household headed by her current spouse. In this way a man who brings a woman and her children into his household in common-law marriage does assume some of the responsibility for children that are not his. For this reason, a man may be reluctant to enter into even a common-law marriage with a woman who has a large number of children by other men, and especially if these fathers do not regularly help with their support. Women can and do often go to court in order to get support from the fathers of their children, and the court usually rules in their favour, but these decisions are difficult to enforce if the man insists upon neglecting this obligation. In the last analysis, informal sanctions are the most effective, and if these fail, there is very little that can be done about it.

When, after a series of fruitful non-legal unions, marriage takes place, the legal status of the children is significantly altered. But only those children of the legalized marriage are legitimized, and the outside children of both the husband and wife remain forever illegitimate. In general, the difference between legitimacy and illegitimacy is not a marked one, but it is great enough to become the source of some conflict for the parents. Men frequently use this as an excuse to postpone marriage, saying that they do not wish to introduce such a distinction between their children, all of whom they insist must be equal. Within a household, too, the outside children of the wife stand in danger of becoming less favoured than the legitimate children of the couple. For these reasons, too, both men and women will sometimes postpone their marriage until all their outside children are old enough to take care of themselves.

Apparently in some cases marriage and its consequent legitimization of the children of the couple introduces a noticeable difference in the attitude of the father toward his outside children, and some men almost completely reject them thereafter. Some cases of this sort were observed at Black Point, and they seemed to be associated with considerable desire for social mobility; hence they are explained in terms of attempts to present an unblemished image of middle-class respectability.

Until marriage occurs, a man's and his non-legal spouse's kindreds are completely independent of each other. This independence permits an easy termination of the common-law unions, for neither set of kin has any particular jural relationship to the other and neither has any particular reason to insist it be held together. This applies almost equally to non-legal unions that have produced children as to those that have not. With legal marriage, however, this independence lessens considerably. The marriage ceremony and the festivities that follow (see Beckwith,¹⁹ Henriques,²⁰ Clarke,²¹ Kerr²²)

¹⁹Beckwith, Martha Warren. *Black Roadways: A Study of Jamaican Folk Life*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1929.

²⁰*op. cit.*, pp. 96-99.

²¹*op. cit.*, pp. 85-88.

²²*op. cit.*, pp. 85-86.

bring both close kin into co-operative interaction, probably for the first time, and this serves as the model for their subsequent interaction. Moreover, when a legally married couple has domestic troubles and they are contemplating a separation, these close kin will do everything they can to smooth out the difficulties and bring about a reconciliation.

Only at marriage does godparenthood come into any prominence. In the communities studied by Clarke²³ their roles were limited to making specific contributions to the wedding ceremony. Since the godparents must be legally married, their participation seems to reinforce the respectability of the occasion. At Mangrove Beach and Black Point godparenthood was practically absent, even though in the latter village the people were thoroughgoing churchmen with two long-established Protestant churches and several Fundamentalist sects represented. Godparents here, for those few who had them, were regarded only as favourite relatives who might be called upon from time to time for small favours. The custom of assigning godparents to illegitimate children in order to align them with married relatives, and the bestowal of the honour of godparenthood on some well-to-do persons in hopes of receiving favours from them seems to have been frequent a few generations back, but it is not done at the present time.

Plural unions are to be found, but they are infrequent. The most prevalent kind is where a legally married man keeps a mistress in some other district or village. Even though these are not concealed in any way, there is a certain reticence in discussing them, for many persons strongly disapprove of them. True polygynous unions, in common law of course, also occur occasionally. One notable instance involved a man who for many years had maintained a stable relationship with five women by whom he had over fifty children. What is truly remarkable is that he had managed to provide land and a house for each of the spouses and cultivation land for each of his sons. Even though the community did not condone his pluralistic preferences, they did admire his industry and devotion to the mothers and all the children.

Even common-law polyandrous arrangements can be uncovered if one searches long and hard enough. One such at Mangrove Beach involved a stable union, the man in which had been blinded and permanently maimed in a fishing accident. He is completely unable to work and must be supported by his girl friend. Everyone in the village who can afford to, hires her to do laundry and other chores, just to give her assistance. She has also entered into another non-legal union, cooks all of this man's meals, and spends several nights each week at his house. The two men seem to get along well together and even spend some time with each other. The village chooses to ignore the second common-law relationship and praises the woman for doing everything she can to support her unfortunately crippled boy friend.

²³*Op. cit.*, pp. 85-87.

Despite these examples, the marital pattern is a monogamous one, but a monogamy which has two jural alternatives — legal and non-legal. While the legal alternative consists of a set of permanent and legally enforceable rights and obligations, the non-legal alternative consists of a set of rights and obligations toward which the legal system is indifferent, and which are terminable at any time by either partner. The modal pattern in the lower class is for one or more non-legal unions to precede a legal marriage, the latter not occurring until the man has achieved some measure of economic security. The period between sexual maturity and permanent marriage is one of great ambiguity and instability, during which a number of illegitimate children are born, as the young adults move in and out of non-legal unions. These children usually remain with their mothers, while their fathers are expected to provide only partially for them. In taking a spouse, either legal or non-legal, a man is expected to help to provide for all the children the woman brings to the union with her, regardless of who their fathers are, or how much maintenance for the children is received from them.

The Organization of Household Activities.

The Jamaican lower-class household, as the term is used here, refers to a co-resident family group, which is spatially separate and usually, but not invariably, consists of more than one person, these being close kin. Economically, it may be a relatively independent unit of production, exploiting its productive capital for its own use and sharing its resources according to the need of each member. But its most important feature is the way in which its members perform a number of essential services for each other, these services being organized according to a division of labour by sex and age.

In physical layout the lower-class household consists of a house, a detached kitchen or cook house, and a yard area. Each of these areas is the location of important activities which make up the domestic routine. The house is usually used mainly for sleeping and for storing clothing and other articles of personal value. The poorer the household, the more the use of the house is restricted to just these activities, while the houses of the more well-to-do will have space and furnishings for additional activities such as relaxing, entertaining, and eating. Houses vary from simple, one-room structures made of wattle and thatch and with earth floors to multi-room buildings of frame or concrete construction, metal or shingle roofs, and plank or cement floors. The house and its furnishings are one of the best indices of wealth and position among the lower class, for everyone will invest in these all that can be spared. The cook house is usually a temporary structure and has less care lavished upon it than on the living house. It is used for preparing and storing food, and in most poor households, the family eats here in bad weather. It can also serve as a general utility shed and working space when other special structures have not been erected in the yard for these purposes. The yard is the scene of great miscellany of activities. On this swept ground between

house and kitchen, the children play, the washing is done, the family relaxes, and friends are entertained. In it and surrounding it a few food-producing trees are grown, the small animals are tethered, and space is given over to a small vegetable garden. The yard is frequently fenced to keep animals in, and friends and neighbours pay respect to this boundary by never entering without being asked. Far more respect, however, is paid to the house, for this cramped space affords the only real sanctum of privacy for the household against the rest of the neighbourhood.

The house, yard, and kitchen are dominated by the adult women of the household, for most of the perennial work which goes on in them is in their charge. Women prepare the food, do the washing and mending, tend the kitchen garden, look after the small animals, and most important, look after the children. Older children lighten the work of the adult women, some by assisting in the easier tasks such as sweeping, watering the animals, collecting kindling, hauling water, picking fruit from the trees, and going to the neighbourhood shop. But even though the youngsters are of considerable economic importance, they must be supervised and directed, and this, again, falls to the adult women. Women, too, see to the weekly marketing, an all-day undertaking which frequently requires a long walk or a ride by bus or truck to the nearest market place. Although this responsibility is not considered to be a particularly onerous one, still many women cannot free themselves for this trip on Saturday, and they have their friends and relatives do it for them.

The adult men and older boys of the household assist in heavier tasks, such as looking after the larger and more valuable animals, (if there are any), repairing the house and cook house, chopping logs, spading a new kitchen garden, and even assisting with the processing of food products which are to be sold. But men's work is not nearly so confined to the round of domestic duties as is the women's. To them falls the major responsibility of the cultivation plot, or "ground," as it is called. In many instances this is removed some distance from the house site, and the men go to and from it daily, leaving the women in charge of the household activities and children. Men, of course, do most of the wage work which takes them away from the domestic scene. They alone congregate in one another's yards or at the local shops to socialize. Women and older children assist the men in the heavy cultivation, and their services are of great value during planting and harvest times. But the women's roles in primary agricultural production are supplemental, just as the men's are in the purely domestic area. To women, however, falls the job of selling the produce, either from house to house or in the system of internal markets, (see Mintz²⁴).

Although the division of adult labour is not rigidly fixed by sex, it is the context of the household group which makes it clear. The rule, as in many European societies, is that women dominate the services of the domestic

²⁴Mintz, Sidney W. "The Jamaican Internal Marketing Pattern," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1955, pp. 95-103.

so
se
su
th
fo
w
in
in
pl
va
w
he
fo
in
th
he
th
in
so
of
un
(C
no
ol
an
sar
act
the
C
In
mo
or
tas
yar
stri
fish
boo
the
mer
T
25
26
27
1957
28

scene, while the men are concerned with productive working outside. Each sex may assist the other in some of his or her work, but this assistance is supplementary to the major responsibilities of each sphere. With respect to the economic system of the island as a whole, most of the jobs for wages are for men, while the women are limited to the kinds of personal services upon which both sexes of all ages depend. The one major exception to this is the important role the women play in the marketing system, which takes them into a specialized sphere of economic exchange. It is this general but flexible plan which enables the household group to adjust and maintain itself in a variety of situations and with a variety of different compositions. For instance, when the productive potential of men is limited or completely absent in a household, the women are able to take over their economic function by performing domestic services, for pay, in other households (e.g., taking in washing and mending, or cooking for single men). Or the women can expand their marketing activities in order to provide a cash income for their household group. Men may keep a sort of bachelor's household by cooking for themselves, but there are some kinds of services such as washing and mending clothes or caring for children which they never do, and they must get some women to do for them. This dependence upon the household services of women is a major factor of motivation in some temporary non-legal marital unions, which have been called "keeper" and "housekeeper" marriages (Clarke,²⁵ Henriques,²⁶ Roberts,²⁷ Simey,²⁸).

Since the household tasks fall so heavily upon the women's shoulders, nothing, except money, is more valued there than extra female hands. An older daughter can look after the younger children, help with the washing, and take over some of the kitchen drudgery. An older woman can do the same things as well as supervise others, and by so doing, relieve a more active woman to go to market or to go to the ground to help her husband there.

Older boys can perform all the tasks that the women leave for the men. In fact, there are some jobs, such as climbing tall fruit trees, which are almost specifically performed by this age and sex group. With an older boy or two in the house, a man can be almost completely free of any household tasks whatsoever, and free to spend all of his time away from the house and yard. Old men have little to do around the house, for they can neither do the strictly feminine tasks nor those requiring agility and strength. Among the fishermen, however, the old men looked after net mending and making bamboo plait for the fish pots. But this limited value of feeble old men is partly the reason so many are reduced to begging and hanging around the younger men for handouts.

This division of labour has an important effect on the interaction patterns

²⁵*op. cit.*, 1957, pp. 100-102.

²⁶*op. cit.*, 1953, pp. 105-111.

²⁷Roberts, George W. *The Population of Jamaica*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1957, pp. 265-266.

²⁸*op. cit.*, 1946, p. 85.

between households. Women, saddled as they are with domestic responsibilities, are not always free to leave their yards and to visit each other. Some young mothers hardly leave their homes for weeks on end, because there is no one there to relieve them, even for a few hours. Youngsters are always sent on errands, but if these require going some distance only an older boy can be sent. Men, on the other hand, are working away from the yard most of the time, and when they are free from these duties, they are able to move about as much as they wish. Older women, and particularly those with grown daughters, are free to go to market, and to visit, but they usually restrict their socializing to Saturdays at the weekly market and Sundays at church.

Most of the activities that fall within the framework of the household group — and there are many others not mentioned here (see Smith,²⁹) — relate to the maintenance and support of the dependent members. This becomes clearest when the life history of an individual is traced from his initial to his final dependency on the household. A child is born, literally, in the household of which its mother is a member. During the first years of life, his needs are satisfied there by his mother, older sisters, aunts, and maybe a grandmother. Almost from birth, girls and boys receive different treatment and different behaviour is expected from them. This becomes pronounced during the toddling period as different modesty and toilet habits are learned. By childhood, the domestic tasks which boys and girls are given are almost fully sex-typed. Little girls are with their mothers and older women constantly, imitating and assisting them as they are able. Little boys, although still dependent upon the women for almost everything, are not pressed into occupational roles nearly so strongly, and they are allowed to play more. During the school years, both boys and girls are fairly restricted to the school and home yard, but boys are always allowed more freedom to play and to associate with other boys. The games for boys and girls are different, and when they are playing in mixed games, their roles are clearly sex-typed.³⁰ It is in these large mixed games supervised by adults where one sees a very wide range of ages among the participants.

Young boys always have fewer and less irksome household chores than girls of the same age. Since they are allowed much more freedom of movement in and out of the yard, many play truant from school from the earliest years there. Many parents care little whether the boys learn anything at school or not, as long as they spend some of their time there. These less motivated boys fall behind the rest of their class and eventually drop out altogether.

By adolescence, most girls are fully capable of performing almost all of their adult domestic tasks, but this is not true of all boys. Adolescent boys

²⁹Smith, Raymond T. "The Family in the Caribbean," in *Caribbean Studies: A Symposium*, Institute of Social and Economic Research, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, 1957.

³⁰Beckwith, Martha Warren, *Folk Games In Jamaica*, Vassar College, Publications of the Folklore Foundation, No. 1, Poughkeepsie, New York, 1922.

seem neither fully competent nor psychologically ready to fill an adult role. By the end of the school years at the age of fifteen or sixteen, the young women are firmly integrated into the adult routine of the household, and they are more restricted to their yards than ever. Part of this restriction consists in their mothers' attempts to keep them away from men. For the young man, late adolescence is the beginning of a time of extremes, depending almost entirely upon the economic circumstances of his household of orientation. If it is extremely poor and without land or other positive resources, the pressures will be strong for him to find a way to provide for himself, and even to leave the house so as to lessen the economic strain of support on others. Or he may be just as strongly enjoined not to leave, but to find work to help support the rest of the group. If the household is not so poor, and land is available, he may be urged to remain and to either assist on it or to take a piece for himself. In this way he can ease considerably the load carried by the aging males of the group. On the other hand, if the household is prosperous, no one will care much what he does, and he can enjoy himself as he pleases for still a few more years. Under these circumstances, and provided that he is bright and interested, he may be sent on to school or apprenticed to a trade. Girls, too, may be sent on to school or into some form of informal apprenticeship such as dressmaking.

In order to alleviate the economic strain, impoverished households may send some of their young children to related households which can more easily provide for them. When necessary, too, adolescent girls may leave their households to work as domestics in strange middle- and upper-class houses or, sometimes, in the homes of distant relatives. Grown women with children may do the same, leaving their children at their own household to be cared for by the women there. If they become pregnant again while away, and are not living with a man, they need only return to their own household to have the baby.

Much has already been said of the unstable period from adolescence to permanent marriage, and it will be referred to again, for it is a crucial period in the lower-class Jamaican's life. It will be recalled that a woman may move in and out of her natal household several times before she establishes herself permanently with a husband. For the man, the instability of the period is directly related to his economic position, and a measure of security, an early legal marriage, and no illegitimate children allow him to consolidate his resources and obligations within a single household of which he is the head. In this case, it is relatively easy for him to bring in his aging parents or other close relatives as the need arises and, from the point of view of continuity, his household replaces that of his parents. But if he has little security to start with and, through a series of non-legal unions, assumes the responsibility for several outside children who are scattered in different households, and if he has still further obligations to aging parents and grandparents, the conflict of loyalties among them (and to his own well-being) makes his position extremely difficult. The reconciliation of the dilemma lies in one of

two directions. The least frequently followed, but one that does occur in many cases, is for the man to cut himself off from all his obligations entirely, and to spend the rest of his life as an unattached individual, working at jobs when and where he is able, and living in periodic non-legal unions as befit his circumstances. From the point of view of the individual life cycle, this means a prolongation of the roles of late adolescence and early manhood throughout life. From the point of view of household continuity, there is none, for such an individual, even though he fathers children, does not establish a complete household within which these children are reared and oriented — all these are done within the context of other households, of which he is not a permanent member.

The more frequent alternative is for a man to move toward a consolidation of all his obligations and potential assets by setting up a household around a permanent marriage. With meagre resources, this is extremely difficult, but it is the only way in which he can fulfill all his obligations of kinship, and at the same time lay the groundwork for security in his own declining years and return to dependency. Choosing the first alternative is a denial of these obligations, and it releases others from their reciprocal duties toward him when he needs them most; choosing the second alternative is the way by which the social system persists.

The achievement of a stable marriage and a consolidated household group does not mean that any measurable degree of social mobility has been gained. For both husband and wife, this is only a repeat performance of what their parents did. But in so doing, the couple provide the fundamental resources with which their children will begin their adult lives. If this is firmly established, then the obligation their children have to them will be strong, and the framework of their own security in old age is also established. Security in old age is ever a concern for lower-class persons, for there is nothing so miserable and degrading as to be forced to live out these years in want and in isolation. The greatest assurance against this threat is to have been successful in establishing a large and prosperous household which contains all one's children and grandchildren.

The Composition of the Household.

From what has been described already, it can be seen that the Jamaican lower class household can vary greatly in size and composition. Simey³¹ and Henriques³² attempt to classify these variations according to conjugal relationships around which they are formed. These are: the *Christian family*; *faithful concubinage*; *companionate* or *keeper family*; the *disintegrate*, *maternal*, or *grandmother family*. Cohen³³ sees two types, *patripotestal* and *matripotestal*, which differ from each other by having or not having a dominant male as head of the household. Clarke³⁴ classifies them into *simple*,

³¹*op. cit.*, 1946, pp. 82-83.

³²*op. cit.*, 1953, pp. 105-106.

³³*op. cit.*, 1956, pp. 670-683.

³⁴*op. cit.*, 1957, p. 117.

extended, denuded, single person, and sibling types, according to their adult membership, and into *primary, secondary, and childless* subtypes, according to the kinds of dependent children present. She goes much farther than this and provides a minute breakdown of each of these types by conjugal status, size, types of kin included, and still more parameters. Cumper³⁵ does not attempt a classification by gross type, but presents his data by the variables of conjugal type, categories of kin included, and age and sex of the household head. Out of these excellent data emerge several features which, as Cohen, Clarke, and Cumper have each seen, are best described as organizational patterns, not as a series of discrete or alternative types. The analysis to follow is an attempt to reduce the number of household variables which have already been studied in detail by these and other investigators to what seems to be the most salient few. This, unfortunately, does an injustice to the richness of much of the primary sources, but at the same time it seems to unify many disparate features into a more holistic view of the family.

Let us first consider the size of the lower-class household as separate from other features. Clarke³⁶ finds the mean size of household increases from 2.7 persons in Sugartown, to 3.3 in Mocca, to 5.7 in Orange Grove. Correspondingly, she finds the percentages of extended family types³⁷ increases from 28 in Sugartown, to 42 in Mocca, to 52 in Orange Grove.³⁸ Similar differences are recorded by Cumper³⁹ between Caymanas, a sugar estate, and Porter's Mountain, an agricultural community. From the other data included in these reports, the increase in household size in these communities seems to be correlated with the relative stability and amount of productive resources available to the households. Within a single community, Black Point, this same trend is very noticeable, for household size is clearly correlated with the value of the productive capital (land and fishing equipment) controlled by the household.

The relationship between size and economic factors is related to marriage, for it will be recalled that legal marriage usually comes as a consequence of a man gaining and maintaining a measure of economic security and stability. This is brought out by Clarke's⁴⁰ and Roberts'⁴¹ findings that the fertility of married couples is greater than that of common law unions. It can be summarized, then, that the size of households increases as a function of greater economic wealth and stability, and this also correlates with the rate of frequency of legal marriage.

The size does not increase indefinitely, however, but is distributed around a mode or modes (1.0, in Sugartown, 2.0 and 6.0, in Mocca, 5.0, in Orange Grove) and rarely exceeds ten persons. We expect, too, that central ten-

³⁵*op. cit.*, 1958.

³⁶*op. cit.*, 1953, p. 196.

³⁷*ibid.*, pp. 117-118, provides a definition of the types.

³⁸*ibid.*, pp. 191-195.

³⁹*op. cit.*, 1958.

⁴⁰ *op. cit.*, 1957, p. 125.

⁴¹*op. cit.*, 1957, pp. 297-299.

dencies and standard deviations for household size will vary significantly with the kinds of basic economies they depend upon. For example, a subsistence agricultural household with ample land, because of its need for labour, might accommodate more persons than could a household whose income, though approximately equal, is derived from wages. Hence there should be a decrease in size from country to town.

There is also a reversal of this trend in size when large social class boundaries are traversed. Middle-and upper-class family groups tend to be biological families, consisting only of parents and children, and are not extended by the inclusion of lineal and collateral kin. This is explained by a number of factors which are discussed below, but part of the explanation seems to lie in the fact that within the households in these classes, there is no need to hold and to keep labour within the group.

Given the potentiality to expand, that is, the ability to support and maintain a number of persons collectively in a single household unit, a lower-class household can recruit members in four ways: 1) by the birth of children to the nuclear couple; 2) by the inclusion of children by previous marital unions; 3) by bringing in and supporting dependent children of close, but poorer, relatives; and 4) by incorporating older, dependent relatives of ascending generations. All but the first of these require some explanation, for it is the pattern of each, in connection with the instability of non-legal marriage, which gives to the lower-class households their characteristic structural shapes. We will, for the moment, restrict this discussion to a household which is centred around a stabilized marriage.

As already emphasized, children usually remain with their mother throughout their dependency period, regardless of her marital career. If this culminates in a stable union, then the nucleus of a new and productive household may be established around the married couple. Added to them will be their own children and the dependent children of the wife by previous unions — her husband's stepchildren — who are of no kin to him and who do not have his name. It is not uncommon to find half-siblings with three, four, and even five different surnames together in the same household with their mother and her husband. A legally married husband under these circumstances will rarely bring any of his illegitimate children by other women to live in his home.⁴²

In addition to these children of the women, and depending upon the ability of the household to support additional dependents, there may be included still other children of the wife's close kin. Most frequently these are children of her daughter or sister, less frequently of her son and her brother. These children are not adopted in the legal sense, but are residing in the household only because their own mothers are unable to provide adequately for them, and they have called upon their kinsmen to help support them. The inclusion of close relatives' children is not motivated solely by kinship obligations, however, for an older couple whose children have left or are about to leave may

⁴²See Clarke, *op. cit.*, 1957, p. 119.

wish to bring someone in to help with chores around the house. More well-to-do households may bring in a related young woman to be a domestic servant, to whom they may ostentatiously refer as their "maid." Regardless of the underlying motivations and circumstances, the collateral children (sister's and brother's children) may often be treated as second-rate members of the household for, not being adopted, they remain the primary responsibility of their own parents and do not have the rights and privileges of direct descendants.

A man of a household will bring his or his relative's children into his own household only when his spouse (legal or non-legal) has no outside children of hers or her relatives there, and only when there is also a close female relative of his (e.g., his mother or his sister) living there to look after them. The reasons for this are clearly stated by informants; there must be a responsible woman present to care for them, and this woman must be consanguineally close to them and cannot be a stepmother, i.e., mother-in-law. Bringing the wife's or the husband's outside children together under the same roof brings together persons who are not kin to each other in any way, and this sets the stage for favouritism and conflict. Several instances where these rules were violated were closely observed at Black Point, and each revealed that a great amount of tension had developed out of the fact that the father's spouse neither had nor was willing to exert authority over her husband's children, while the husband accused his wife of either showing favouritism and over-concern for her own children or hostility and under-concern for his.

Table 4 summarizes the data from 375 persons at Mangrove Beach and Black Point regarding the principal female agent of socialization in their lives. It is to be noted that, by eliminating the mother and the stepmother, there is no decided preference shown for mother's or father's relatives. Clarke⁴³ however, finds that out of eighty-eight cases where children were reared by women other than their mothers, mother's kin were selected 67 per cent of the time. It is believed that Clarke's figures, though drawn from a small sample, are more representative of what happens in Jamaica as a whole than the larger samples drawn by Davenport in the two coastal communities.

TABLE 4. WOMEN PERFORMING THE PRINCIPAL ROLE OF SOCIALIZATION.

Mother's kin	Percent	Father's kin	Percent
"Mother" (Mo)	.76	"Mother in law" (FaWi)	.07
"Grandmother" (MoMo)	.04	"Grandmother" (FaMo)	.04
"Aunt" (MoSi)	.02	"Aunt" (FaSi)	.02
"Aunt in law" (MoBrWi)	.005	"Aunt in law" (FaBrWi)	.005
"Cousins" (MoBrDa)	.002	"Cousins" (FaBrDa)	.002
(MoSiDa)	.002	(FaSiDa)	.002
			.139
Other distant relatives	.02		
Unrelated persons	.01		
	.859		.859
			.998

⁴³*op. cit.*, 1957, 129-131.

In these latter settings, the importance of fishing, a male activity, seemed always to emphasize the male side of the household more than in cases where the productive labour is based on agriculture.

Even though placing a child in a close relative's household for life does not constitute legal adoption, a kind of adoption does occur. One case is recorded at Black Point where a man, by his own reckoning, adopted a boy who was no kin to him by changing his name to his own, but without going through any court formalities. The real father of the child, also a resident of the community, recognized the adoption without complaint. This case is a special one, because the mother of the child was dead; otherwise it is unlikely that adoption would have occurred. Whether or not this would be recognized in a court of law is also open to question.

While the tie between a mother and her dependent children is an especially strong one, there is an almost equally strong reciprocal obligation between an adult man and his mother. This is the economic obligation to support her through old age; it is only slightly less strong between a woman and her mother, and less strong still between a man and his father. The most convenient way for a man to fulfil this obligation is to move his parents into his own household where they may be of some assistance in the domestic round of activity. We thus find a tendency toward skewedness in some three-generation households — kin of ascending generations tend to be those of the husband, while kin of descending generations are either children of both spouses or kin of the wife alone. As noted above, the exceptions to this are where a man has in his household a close female relative of his, e.g., his mother. Then he may bring in some of his own outside children to be taken care of by her. A few exceptions to the rule for ascending generations also occur where a man will have his wife bring her mother into his household to help look after his wife's outside children — but he will never bring in both her mother and father.

These expansional tendencies are illustrated by distributions of households at Black Point, where 89 per cent of all three-generation households with co-residing spouses (married and common-law) contained husband's kin of ascending generations only; none contained wife's kin of ascending generations only; and 11 per cent contained some of both. From the same sample, excluding children of husband and wife together, 74 per cent contained descending kin of the wife only; 2 per cent contained descending kin of the husband only; and 24 per cent contained some of both.

The compositional picture of the lower-class household drawn thus far has overstressed, perhaps, the extended, three-generation (and sometimes, four-generation) group, when in fact, the simple, two-generation, non-extended form is more frequent, and, in some communities at least, single-person households even predominate.⁴⁴ This was done merely to show in what directions lie the growth potentials of the simple non-extended family, and how these are related to the systems of kinship and marriage. It remains to summarize

⁴⁴See Clarke, *op. cit.*, 1957, p. 196.

the way in which new households are formed, and one other way in which households expand.

During the ambiguous period of post-adolescence, and when strong pressures are put on the young man to leave his household of orientation, these are usually strongest for the illegitimate sons of women who are now legally married, and have other legitimate children by their husbands. Not frequently, there is land on their mother's side of the family which may be taken up; or their own fathers may have something to give them; or they may gravitate toward the towns and estates looking for work. Thus the outside sons of legally married women, being the eldest, having no connection with the step-father in whose houses they have lived, and being separated from their own fathers, are almost sure to detach themselves and set up single-person domiciles.

Often the pressures will be equally strong on the young man to remain part of his household of orientation. This occurs when his labour is needed there to help support the group, for instance when there is no other adult man present, and his own father is failing, has land, and wishes his son to take over the responsibilities. When this is a case of a son replacing another man who is already in the household, it is sure to be this man's son, not his wife's son. If there is no land and no local work, the young man may have to leave the community, as above, in search for employment. However, he leaves not as a detached person, but as a contributing member of his household of orientations, and he probably intends to return to it as soon as possible. Thus the statistics on single-person households which are always reported in high frequency on the estates, contain two types: those men who are completely detached or in the process of becoming so; and those who are living on the estate during the harvest only, and will return to their households when the work is finished.

Men in both these relationships to other households also turn up at fishing communities such as Mangrove Beach. Domiciles there containing two, three, and four men could not be considered as joint male households in the sense that the term is used here, for, unless the men were closely related, they shared nothing. Even after months of living in the same small thatch dwelling, each man cooked his own food, ate it separately, and worked at or shared nothing co-operatively with the other men of his shack. The reason for this is that each man considered this only a temporary state of affairs. Some looked to wives and children in other districts as constituting their households and others were hoping to get enough money and a non-legal spouse in order to set up a household at the beach.

A son who remains in his household of orientation in place of an absent father becomes the male head of that household. He may bring into it a spouse, or a series of non-legal spouses (with and without children by previous unions), and the household assumes the somewhat skewed shape described above. In instances where the father is still resident in the household, but

is not able to head that household group fully, the same applies. But where a vigorous and fully competent father is still head of his own household, there is high probability that the son will move out, even though he may be using some of his father's land, when he takes a spouse of his own. In such cases the son may only move to the other side of the yard, where he will build his own living house and a kitchen for his wife, and the two households will share the same yard. This was a frequent occurrence among Black Point households, where it was easy for young men to establish themselves as independent fishermen, but land for house sites was scarce.

When there are several grown brothers, each in turn may remain for a time in the household of orientation, but as long as their father remains fully active, they will move out and establish their own households with their spouses, even though this might only be across the yard. Rarely indeed, do two brothers and their spouses (or two sisters, or a brother and a sister with their spouses) ever set up a joint household, although clusters of closely related households are quite common. The rule of household formation, then, is that no single household will contain more than one active conjugal pair. When this is found, as it certainly is, either the man of the elder couple is partially or wholly dependent upon the younger man, or it is a temporary arrangement, and the younger couple is about to move out and establish its own household. In other words, true patrilocal or matrilocal extended families which share the same household facilities do not form.

As parents grow old and all their children move out into their own households, even if only across the yard, the independence of the parental household begins to lessen. This decline is marked both by the taking over of many of the activities of the former by the offspring households, and a gradual absorption of the declining household into one or more of the younger ones. With the death of either parent, the process of absorption is hastened, for the surviving parent must eventually be incorporated into one his children's households.

The social pressures on the post-adolescent woman are very different from those on the man. She is rarely eased out of her household of orientation, although the poverty and drudgery there may make even a temporary non-legal union quite appealing. Unless she has property of her own, both legal and non-legal marriages are virilocal from her point of view; that is, she will join her spouse in his household when he asks her to, but she always has her mother's household to return to, or to send her children to, if she cannot succeed in her marriage or cannot manage to keep her children with her. This strong tie with the mother and with the household of orientation is the basic structural relationship behind the celebrated matricentric (maternal, grandmother, matrifocal, matripotestal) households, which consist of a grandmother without a spouse, her dependent grandchildren (usually her daughter's children) and, not infrequently, one or more of her daughters, who are also without spouses. In other words it is the skewed extended household described above, but without adult men. Such a household can obviously develop

only when there is a house, some land, or sufficient income to support the group independently, or else all the members would be absorbed into other, more secure households. But active, mature women can become self-supporting by a number of occupations such as higgling, sewing, washing, and preparing food. This is not too difficult if the house and enough land for a kitchen garden are owned by one of the women. Many of these matricentric households receive some support from the fathers of the young dependent children that are present; from sons who are helping their mothers and sisters; or from some man who is in fact a common-law husband of one of the women, but who is not able to bring her into his own household. At Black Point, for example, in nearly all of the instances of two- and three-generation households without adult men, the house and house site were owned by one of the women, usually having been inherited from her parents, and one of the women had a boy friend who visited regularly and contributed substantially toward the maintenance of the whole household.

Here again we can see why in some non-legal unions the partners do not share the same household. Each is tied to his own household by strong obligatory ties of consanguinity. The non-legal conjugal bond is a weak one and regarded by the society as little different from just a casual sexual affair. The weak positive sanctions of the non-legal marriage are just not strong enough to force the man to either set up a new household into which he might bring his spouse, or to make the necessary adjustments at his own household so that he might move his girl friend there. The result is a split residential arrangement which does not found a new household, but through it children may be born and absorbed into already existing households.

The single male household is to be seen as the complement to the matricentric household. The prevalence of the latter is accentuated, however, by a general excess of marriageable females over males in Jamaica as a whole.⁴⁵ But both are to be seen as unstable structures which can change into some other form very easily.

Land Tenure and the Household.

To a fundamentally rural people such as the Jamaican lower class the relationship of the household group to the land is of crucial importance in the determination of many of that group's most characteristic features. Yet despite the very painstaking and knowledgeable analyses of land tenure presented by Clarke⁴⁶ this remains a very knotty problem, in need of a great deal more clarification. One of the major sources of difficulty lies in the fact that the period of slavery, even in the longest genealogies, is but four or five generations removed, and it is not to be expected that a set of perfectly consistent and integrated patterns could have evolved in that short span of time.

According to Clarke, land is held in three types of tenure: *bought land*, (

⁴⁵Roberts, *op. cit.*, 1957, pp. 70-76.

⁴⁶*op. cit.*, 1953; 1957, pp. 33-71.

family land, and inherited land. Each is defined by a different set of customary values, restrictions, and limitations. Bought land is fee simple, or property which has been acquired by the holder without entailments. It can be used, transmitted, and disposed of according to the will of the holder. Family land is fee tail property, which at the behest of the original holder(s) should be held jointly and perpetually by all his (their) descendants. Inherited land is fee simple property which has acquired the additional value only of having been inherited. Both bought land and inherited land can be transmitted according to the wishes of the owner; therefore it can be converted into family land by a decree to this effect by the holder. Family land is not supposed to be divided or converted into fee simple except by the consent of all the holders, but even this is questioned, since such an act would be regarded as a violation of the sacred wishes of the original holder — their common ancestor. No distinction is drawn between land which is used for cultivation and that used for house sites.

The inheritance of fee simple land and moveable property presents no problems, for the holder usually designates, verbally or by written will, how he wishes it to be divided among his survivors. While people recognize some legal and social differences between legitimate and illegitimate children, this difference is of little importance when it comes to inheritance. In cases of intestacy, however, Jamaican law recognizes only legitimate children as heirs and gives preference to the eldest son. Knowledge of this and the wish to divide property equitably among all children, legitimate and illegitimate, stimulates most Jamaicans to draw up wills. Unfortunately, these are frequently obscure and unwitnessed, and so they are easily contested by any unscrupulous person who knows the ins and outs of legal procedure. The contents of wills are kept completely secret, by most men at least, so the potential heirs are never quite sure of their inheritance until the reading of the will.⁴⁷ Informants at Black Point had many stories of the surprises, disappointments, and bitterness caused by this secrecy. In general, the pattern of inheritance of valuable property is bilateral, without formal recognition of age, but with a slight tendency to favour sons over daughters in regard to land. Only a legally married spouse will inherit from the other, but this must be specifically set out in the will. A surviving parent, however, will always be supported by the children, and so there is no great need to make a provision for them in the inheritance.

According to all data, family land is supposed to be held corporately by all the bilateral descendants of the original holder. According to Clarke it is intimated, but not expressly stated, that all these descendants, regardless of number, generation or genealogical connection share equally in any one piece of family land. That is to say, if there are five holders in one generation, they share equally, and if there are twenty in the next generation, they also share equally, despite the fact that one person in the generation above had but one child and another had five. It is also clear that neither prolonged

⁴⁷See Clarke, *op. cit.*, 1957, p. 47.

abs
null
I
gen
one
in v
ing
corp
way
is u
cenc
fam
form
at w
about
Bl
what
cenc
hold
thes
amon
their
from
three
siblin
tively
system
accou
be b
that
at th
the o
Cla
is vio
cours
the la
amon
to per
as she
can in
ing th
One
cases
48op.
49op.

absence, non-use, nor failure to exert one's legitimate claim on family land nullifies a person's or his descendants' claim on it.

If this system is projected indefinitely into the future, even for a few generations, the number of persons who could make legitimate claims on any one piece of family land would be staggering. This is all the more significant in view of the fact that family land holdings are generally very small, amounting to only a few acres at best, and many times to less than an acre. Wherever corporate land-holding groups are found, there is to be found an effective way of limiting the number of eligible claimants at some point in time. This is usually done each generation, by including some and excluding other descendants. So far, however, this limiting mechanism in the case of Jamaican family land has not been discovered. Some of Clarke's data and other information obtained at Black Point are suggestive of what processes may be at work, and we can but summarize these and offer some tentative hypotheses about them.

Black Point family land remains undivided by definition, yet differs from what has been summarized above by not being held equally among all descendants. This state of affairs is reached a generation or so after the original holder wills the land equally and collectively to all his children, for each of these first inheritors transmits his fractional share to be equally distributed among all his children, and when each has a different number of children, their shares become unequal. For example, if three siblings inherit equally from their parent (each holds a one-third share), and they have one, two, and three surviving children to whom the land is passed on, each of these sets of siblings inherits one-third, one-sixth, and one-ninth shares in the land respectively. Black Point family landholders are painfully aware of the fact that the system cannot go on expanding in this way forever. But by keeping accurate accounts of these fractional shares belonging to each sibling set, shares can be bought up by other heirs who can afford to, and in this way it is hoped that the land will be consolidated in a fair way by a few of the heirs, while at the same time the land remains in the family according to the wishes of the original ancestor.

Clarke⁴⁸ describes a case where the covenant of keeping the land undivided is violated, and it is converted into fee simple title by one holder. This, of course, is feasible only when there are few holders, but it is one way in which the land can be consolidated, even though it precipitates much ill feeling among the heirs. Clarke cites two other cases⁴⁹ where attempts are made to permit the collective inheritance to pass only through males, or by *name*, as she terms it. This is a patrilineal innovation, possibly derived from Jamaican intestacy laws, in which sons and daughters enjoy equal rights of use during their lives, but only the sons transmit these rights.

One of the most intriguing aspects of family land is that in none of the cases so fully reported by Clarke, nor in any of those recorded at Black Point,

⁴⁸*op. cit.*, 1957, p. 50.

⁴⁹*op. cit.*, 1957, pp. 53, 58, 62.

are the collective heirs more distantly related than first cousins. Yet in the latter community, genealogies and land histories were traceable for one or two generations beyond the common grandparent who first willed the property to be family land. In these cases, the land was always reported to have been either split or consolidated in the grandparental generation. One speculates as to whether or not the family land system only came into being in this generation (which is unlikely), or whether the genealogies are constantly being altered in some unknown way in order to pare down the ever-broadening span of kin which results from bilateral inheritance. Whatever the answer, family land is still being created at the present time⁵⁰ and constant attempts are being made to bring about its consolidation around fewer kin. This sometimes results in the destruction of the corporate holding by division and conversion into fee simple holdings. Perhaps this is the way to view the system of family land — a system in which corporate, bilaterally inherited, land-holding groups are being constantly formed around siblingships, and these tend to dissolve as they expand into cousinships.

Cultivable land can be rented, and this is such a common practice that rented land should be added as a fourth category in the preceding list of tenure types. Even persons with ample land will rent additional plots with different kinds of soil in order to cultivate certain crops that their own land will not produce. Rents are many times calculated not in cash, but in percentages of the yield, and these seem to be highest between one small holder and another man of the same social and economic stratum, not between the large, upper-class property owners and their tenants. There is no egalitarian camaraderie between small holders and the landless.

Land and wealth are almost synonymous to the lower-class countryman. When he is landless he is poor, with nothing to fall back on in time of need, and no place to go when wage work is done. Under these dire circumstances, households, as we have seen, tend to be small or incomplete, with their potential members dispersed throughout related households which are better able to support them. Even a small plot of land or a share in an already crowded parcel of family land gives a householder some roots, for there he can at least build a wattle-and-thatch hut and plant a small kitchen garden.

The possession of land, too, tends to keep new households from detaching themselves completely from the parental house. As sons and daughters leave their households of orientation provided there is land, they are able to set up their own households on the economic strength of their parents' land. But there is a subtle difference in this regard between fee simple holdings and family land. Because parents keep the contents of their wills secret, a son or daughter is never sure what part of the estate he will inherit, even though he may have been allotted a portion of it for his immediate use. This keeps the economic authority in the parental household and prolongs the dependency of the children, even though they may be grown and have family responsibilities of their own. This is a perennial source of irritation and resentment

⁵⁰See *ibid.*, p. 54.

in some families. But from the point of view of the aging parent, and especially an aging father, it is one way he can keep his family about him to care for him when he needs it most. There is also a strong desire among lower-class Jamaicans to be buried on their own land, preferably family land. In keeping hold of the land until the moment of death, the aging parent is assuring himself also of a suitable burial place. Jamaicans, too, have very strong beliefs about the ghosts of ancestors which linger in the vicinity of the grave, and once a person is respectfully buried on his own property, his descendants will be loath to dispose of this land to outsiders.

With family land, all persons having a legitimate claim on it are assured of this right by birth, and they do not have to wait for a parent to die to find out how much of it they actually possess. But they must exercise their right on the land itself; they cannot convert it into any other kind of capital. Occasionally, when family land is very limited and there are so many co-holders that the land has practically no value to any one of them, one individual among them will use the land, pay the taxes, and assume a kind of stewardship over it in behalf of all the others.⁵¹ But when family land holdings are ample and valuable, many households will be established upon them. Not only will some bring in their spouses, but daughters, too, will sometimes remain there and bring in their husbands to live and work portions. It will be found that while virilocal residence is the preferred rule, uxorilocal residence is fairly frequent, and nearly always found associated with situations where the wife controls the most valuable property. Family land also provides the ideal situation for matricentric households to develop.

In this way a piece of family land may produce a large, bilocally extended family group of separate households. Although these households co-operate together in many activities and are tied together through their common interest in the family property, they do not cultivate in common or distribute their other resources commonly throughout the group. Each household will have its own plot that it cultivates, and each will produce and consume more or less independently of the others. If the family land is divided for use, these divisions are not considered to be permanent or to have any effect on subsequent inheritance. These divisions, however, may be the source of considerable argument and contention, if one of the member households attempts to detach its portion in fee simple. The great advantage of these bilocally extended families is that collectively they form a large labour force which can be quickly and effectively mobilized to assist any one of the constituent households.

Ideally, the spirit of co-operation and mutual aid should bind the family together in true solidarity around a holding of family land, and this is the invariable hope of the founding ancestor. It is a way in which a man with legitimate and illegitimate children can be assured that all his heirs will be equally provided for, despite the law which does not recognize illegitimate children, and they will live together better than they could live in isolation

⁵¹See *op. cit.*, 1957, p. 53.

from each other. It seems to work out this way for the first generation, or as long as no more than siblings are the co-holders. In the next generation, when it is siblings and cousins who must live in co-operation, the bond between them is frequently not sufficiently strong to overcome the irritations and petty rivalries that arise. At this point, the collateral branches are united more by suspicion and fear that some other branch will cheat them in their legitimate claims. The family, then, is held together by the strong bond among siblings, but the sets of siblings are united only by a common but antagonistic interest in their joint property, and the spirit of co-operation which prevailed in the generation before is replaced by isolation and contention between branches.⁵² It is during this state of affairs that the processes of trimming down, consolidation, and disintegration begin to emerge. Some of these processes — patrilineality, partition, and consolidation through purchase by kin — have already been summarized. But when the tension between related sets of siblings becomes unbearable, it is still not clear whether the entire corporate structure is ultimately destroyed, whether one set of siblings (i.e., one collateral branch) emerges victorious as the perpetrators of the corporate group, or whether one result occurs in some instances and the alternate result in other instances.

To recapitulate, in what is, perhaps, an over-simplified manner, the lower-class Jamaican household is a kin grouping without precise organizational shape, but with very specific potentialities for expansion. In its smallest state, it consists of a single man, or rarely, a single woman. This is not a fully self-sufficient household in terms of the activities which are used here to define the group, for it must depend upon the services of women who are members of other households. A comparable state, but more self sufficient, is that in which several closely related women and their children live together without adult men. A third state is that which contains a husband and a wife and their children, but since conjugal relations are quite brittle, this does not necessarily constitute a stable condition. These three shapes, which might be termed *single male*, *matricentric*, and *nuclear family*, are complementary to each other, since adults may move in and out of each kind until both economic and marital stability are found. Many households never develop beyond this phase, for in poverty and with non-success in marriage a stable foundation is never laid. As they mature, the children of these households, having neither the economic security nor, perhaps, the requisite psychological orientations, break away from their households of orientation and reproduce this fluctuating state of affairs in their own generation.

When, however, a nuclear family household does gain both economic and marital stability, it begins to expand by drawing to itself the individuals which the less stable households cannot support or maintain. If it has the material resources to profit from the additional manpower, then its potentialities for expansion are great. The directions of expansion tend to be skewed — ascending kin of the husband and descending kin of the wife — reflecting the nearly

⁵²See *op. cit.*, p. 56.

ins
thi
lat
est
wit
bec
a s
thre
nor
stal
T
the
ly t
bin
is c
gro
clos
as
ulti
line
bet
fam
fully
whi
of s
In
rare
in a
and
mon
expa
any
Con
Th
from
R. T
Fort
grou
53"
Indies
bean."
versity
54"
1955.
55"
Camb

inseparable structural bond between mother and child. As the children of this household select spouses and have children, they are held in close relationship to their household of orientation by the custom of not dividing the estate until the death of the parent who holds the valued property. Only with the division and inheritance of this property do the offspring households become finally detached and independent. If they have by this time reached a state of stability themselves, they may retrace the steps of development through which the parental household passed. But this is neither automatic nor assured since, on becoming independent, they may fluctuate in the unstable conditions described above.

The process of expansion need not cease with the death of the parents and the disappearance of the household of orientation. One of the parents, usually the father, may decree that his estate be held as family land. This then binds the offspring households together into a larger family grouping which is centred — literally, even — around the parent's grave. The shape of this group is a bilocal extended family, with a patrilocal bias, of separate, but closely linked households. The bilocal extended family continues to expand as the offspring households establish themselves on the land. Crowding ultimately sets the forces of reduction and disintegration into action. The lines of conflict seem to be stronger between second collateral branches than between siblings, but the outcome of this stage of the bilocally extended family is not yet clearly understood. There may not even have evolved a fully patterned sequence of events, due to the very short historical period in which this segment of Jamaican society has been emancipated from its heritage of slavery.

Insofar as we understand them, middle and upper-class household groups rarely expand beyond the nuclear family shape, and they replace each other in an unending sequence of the same kind. The relatively secure economic and social position of these classes, together with only one stable form of monogamous marriage, does not create a situation where some households expand at the expense of other less stable types. Neither do households by any process whatsoever adhere into larger localized kin groups.

Conclusions.

The theoretical orientation of this analysis leans heavily upon ideas taken from the works already cited and liberal borrowings from M. G. Smith⁵³ and R. T. Smith⁵⁴ as well. But most of all, it has relied upon the ideas of M. Fortes⁵⁵ in his analysis of the phases in the developmental cycle of domestic groups. While Jamaican society as a whole fits his paradigm in most ways,

⁵³"A Framework for Caribbean Studies," *Caribbean Affairs*, University College of the West Indies, Extra-Mural Department, Mona, Jamaica, 1955. "The African Heritage in the Caribbean," *Caribbean Studies: A Symposium*, Institute of Social and Economic Research, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, 1957.

⁵⁴"Jamaican Society Since Emancipation," *The Times' British Colonies Review*, London, 1955. *The Negro Family in British Guiana*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1956.

⁵⁵"Introduction," in Goody, Jack R. (ed.), *The Development Cycle in Domestic Groups*. Cambridge Papers in Social Anthropology, No. 1, 1958.

the present writer doubts that a single cycle of domestic development exists. Rather, there are at least three separate but complementary cycles. These are 1) the lower-class household cycle, with its capacity for household expansion and absorption of less stable households; 2) the middle- and upper-class cycle, involving no expansion and absorption, which is not yet fully studied; and 3) the cycle of development of the lower-class, bilocal extended family group. To look at all of these in terms of a single system of development and change would be, it is firmly believed, a misapplied model.

The Jamaican situation brings to the fore still another interesting comparison. As noted above, while human reproduction in the Jamaican lower class is insured through its comparatively unrestricted sexual patterns, marriage and the duration of a woman's fertility do not necessarily limit the phase of household expansion as Fortes⁵⁶ suggests. The Jamaican household can go on expanding by absorbing children from other less stable units. A case in point would be where a household incorporates its grandchildren into itself, while the mother of these children goes through a series of unstable non-legal marital unions.

It was also suggested above that not all lower-class households, once established, succeed in replacing themselves, and their children are absorbed into other more durable groups. The same situation probably can be said to apply to the development of the bilocally extended family group. The necessary condition for continuity in both cases is a secure economic foundation, and without it the groups perish. Such a foundation is not guaranteed in the social system, and it can be achieved only by some unknown fraction of groups. Thus to complete Fortes' ⁵⁷ analogy from biology, to the "process of social reproduction" we must add a Darwinian footnote: there is selection, and only those units reproduce themselves which achieve the necessary conditions for maintaining their members.

⁵⁶*ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁷*ibid.* p. 2.

Kinship and Household In Carriacou¹

By

M. G. SMITH

THE SETTING

Although the West Indies contain only a minute fraction of the world's population and land area, even this small fraction is many times subdivided under differing governments and among different islands. Of the Antilles, only Cuba and Hispaniola can be classified as large islands. Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Jamaica are of moderate population and size. Places like Barbados, Grenada, Guadeloupe and Antigua are generally referred to by their larger neighbours as "small islands". However, the archipelago contains many units which are far smaller than Barbados or Grenada. The Turks, Caymans and Caicos island dependencies of Jamaica, Saba, the Virgins, and many others are so much smaller in area and population, that they form a separate economic category, and perhaps a separate social category as well. In this essay I shall try to describe kinship conditions on one of the very small units of this area, even though I cannot say whether or not these data are representative of this class of unit.

Grenada is 64 miles from St. Vincent by a route which is strewn with scores of rocks and small islands known together as the Grenadines. Many of these rocks are inhabited by goats and gulls only. Others are used as shelter by the numerous small craft which ply these waters. Only the larger islands of Mairo, Canouan, Bequia, Union and Carriacou contain sizeable populations. Of these five islands, Carriacou with an area of 13 square miles and a population estimated at 6,800 in 1946 is the largest, and the only one dependent on Grenada. To Carriacou folk, Grenada with its area of 100 square miles is "the mainland"; but Carriacou also has its own island dependencies, the largest of which, Petit Martinique, contains a few hundred souls of mixed Afro-French descent who exploit still smaller islands near them.

Until 1763, Carriacou was a French possession and although the British have administered it since 1783, French cultural influences persist in religion and language. The older people are all bilingual, and speak a creolized Romance language similar to that spoken in St. Lucia, Martinique and Guadeloupe, as well as English, learned overseas or in the schools. By religion, the population is divided into Anglicans and Catholics; Petit Martinique and a community of Scotch descent at Windward opposite it being wholly

¹ I visited Carriacou in 1952-3 in the course of a study of Grenada society and culture as a staff member of the Institute of Social and Economic Research. My observations on Carriacou are set out in two monographs, to be published shortly, *Kinship and Community in Carriacou*, and *West Indian Family Structure*.

Catholic. Unlike the folk of Windward and Petit Martinique, the Negro population who form the majority tend to be mainly Anglican. These Negroes practise an ancestor cult in addition to the Church rituals.

Until 1838, except for the small port and township of Hillsborough, Carriacou was entirely divided into slave plantations, the principal products being sugar-cane and cotton. But even under slavery the value of this island for commercial agriculture was marginal. With its low and erratic rainfall concentrated during the months of May to October, Carriacou is only suitable for crops which mature rapidly. During the slavery period, Carriacou depended on imported camels for internal transport. There are no rivers or streams on the island, and the old cattle-ponds of the sugar plantations now serve as village watering holes. In 1835 on the eve of Emancipation, Carriacou had a population of 3,100, 85 per cent of whom were slaves of African descent. Immediately after the abolition of slavery in 1838, a steady emigration started, the ex-slaves, especially the men, going initially to Grenada and then to Trinidad, which offered higher wages and more liberal employment conditions. In the early 1840's, Carriacou planters were complaining about this labour withdrawal; but after the abolition of Imperial Preference for sugar in 1846, their complaints were lost in the general howl raised by planters throughout the British West Indies. By the 1850's, the planter class had joined the labourers in the emigration from Carriacou. But whereas the labourers maintained their local population, the emigration of the Carriacou planters proved to be permanent; and with them went all the few locals whose skills, wealth and status set them apart from the ex-slaves and identified their interests with the Caribbean elite. By the 1870's the Carriacou plantations were being cultivated on the system of *metayer* or share cropping, under the supervision of local headmen. Cotton, corn, limes, peas and groundnuts were the main crops. With the abandonment of the sugar-cane and the plantation, the islanders lost their main local source of employment. The emigration therefore continued, the men working abroad to acquire the resources with which to establish their own homes and maintain their families afterwards. In the closing decades of the last century, Carriacou emigration flowed to Trinidad and Venezuela where the oil and gold resources were being developed. During this century, these movements continued, Aruba, Curacao, Trinidad, and Venezuela attracting more islanders than Grenada island, only 23 miles away. By 1953 all but two estates on the island had passed into the hands of the peasants, several of them under Government land settlement schemes. In 1953, Dumfries, the last remaining estate of note, was taken over by the Grenadian government for rehabilitation, prior to subdivision and distribution under the land settlement scheme. Marie Galante cotton and groundnuts are now the two principal cash-crops, with limes being grown feebly on the few large land-holdings left. For provisions the population grows peas, maize, okroes, some yams and sweet potatoes. Their sloops and schooners bring other foodstuffs from Grenada, Tri-

nidad
staple
in po
a fair
bean
North
the "
of the
value
In
per c
1,493
island
the t
years
in Ca
of 15
in th
gree
In
cultu
fields
sions
"Fre
feren
ships
este
most
fluen
desti
A sin
large
run e
and
seas
the i
minis
who
duce
but t
on th
in all
the i
2Se
No. 2
3W

nidad and St. Vincent for the weekly market; today, flour and rice are diet staples. Cattle and goats are reared locally, and fish are caught regularly in pots and by seines, lines and nets. In addition, the islanders build and man a fair number of sloops and schooners, sailing the Main and the eastern Caribbean on regular routes, and going as far north as St. Kitts which they call North Island. This schooner traffic has two main centres in Carriacou; among the "Scots" of Windward and the Negroes of L'Esterre, on the western end of the Leeward side.² Clearly, these schooners and sloops have been of great value in the islanders' emigration.

In 1946, the island population was reckoned as 6,769 souls, 3,025 or 44.5 per cent of whom were less than 14 years of age, and of these 3,025 children, 1,493 or 49.3 per cent were males. Of the remaining 3,744 people on the island, only 1,065 were males.³ Thus, males formed only 28.4 per cent of the total population above 15 years of age. If all persons of more than 15 years old are classed as adults, there were 2.5 females for every male adult in Carriacou at the time of this census. Among the children below the age of 15, the sex-ratios were almost exactly equal. The surplus of adult females in this population is the effect and the measure of male emigration. This degree of sex imbalance is no recent feature in Carriacou.

In sum Carriacou depends on emigration, sea-faring, and small-scale agriculture, the men working at sea or abroad while the women work in the fields or "gardens". In this society there are no "classes" or "class-divisions", such as we find in nearby Grenada or St. Vincent. Only among the "French" of Petit Martinique and the "Scots" of Windward, are colour differences socially significant; among the islanders wealth consists mainly of ships, land, cattle or shop goods; prosperity is always contingent on popular esteem and support, and economic differences are never conspicuous. At most there are a dozen families in the island who could be considered affluent, and perhaps there are not many more whom we could regard as destitute. There is also little room for occupational differences in the island. A single bad season or mishap at sea is sufficient to remind the relatively large land-owner or schooner captain of fortune's fickleness, and if the fish run elsewhere, the seines hauled in from the shore are useless to their owners and the villages alike. Restrictive immigration policies or fluctuating overseas trade movements affect all on the island equally. Until 1951 moreover, the island population had no form of representative government. It was administered under the Grenadian Government by a District Commissioner who had magisterial powers. Since then, universal suffrage has been introduced, and Carriacou elects its own member of the Grenadian legislature; but the islanders are well aware that their representative has little influence on the Government's policy, and the District Officer still has the decisive voice in all their local affairs. Preoccupied by problems of subsistence and survival, the islanders have little energy for political activities or disputes.

²See Procope, Bruce, "Launching a Schooner in Carriacou," *Caribbean Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 2, Extra Mural Dept., U.C.W.I., Port of Spain, Trinidad, pp. 122-131.

³West Indian Census, 1946. (1950) Part H. Table 19, p. 19, Govt. Printer, Kingston.

THE LIFE-CYCLE

In Carriacou, the children go to school soon after they are four years old. There are only three Government-supported primary schools on the island, and these merely provide their pupils with the rudiments of literacy. Few children from Carriacou are to be found at either of the Grenadian secondary schools. Adolescent girls remain at home learning womanly work in the kitchen and garden, while the boys are either apprenticed to some local craftsman or turn towards the sea, and prepare to migrate. Most young men of moderate means go abroad to work before they are twenty-one, seeking in this way to save the money they need to build their own home and marry. Some who go away may never return to settle in the island; but a great many do, building their homes, marrying, and then going away once more to earn the money with which to build a shop or vessel, or to purchase the land or cattle which will support the new family until the children are old enough to look after themselves. Since the island offers so little wage-employment and no room for commercial cultivation, each family on the island needs some independent source of cash income to supplement the money obtained from cotton and groundnuts. Shops, rowboats, sloops, schooners, seine-nets, and other fishing tackle, cattle and land are the only forms of investment to be found in Carriacou. House-building for rent or resale is unheard of. It is almost impossible to obtain quarters for rent, although shop-premises and land may be rented for productive purposes. As we shall see, lack of house-rent is assumed by the family organisation of Carriacou.

While their children are of school age, parents are gradually acquiring maturity — women through repeated motherhood, men through increasing involvement in the ancestor rituals held for baptism, the setting up of new homesteads and other familial occasions. These household rituals cannot be held in homes belonging to other people; accordingly house rental is not practised in Carriacou.

When children enter adolescence their parents will be middle aged, and will count among the effective citizens of their community. At this stage fathers should arrange for their sons' apprenticeships, or assist them to go overseas on local vessels or in search of work. Men depend on their wives to supervise their daughters' conduct, and they seek to arrange formal betrothals for these girls. Few girls on this island have children before they are 24 years of age for men who are not formally betrothed to them. A man can formally curse ("wish") his children and junior siblings for conduct of which he severely disapproves. Such a curse, if delivered on just grounds and by the right person, may cut off the accursed from the blessed ancestors. In addition a man may summarily thrash his daughters, or eject them from his home. In such a rare event, the girls may have to leave the island as well as the community, unless their parent is an outsider or otherwise disliked. As age increases, maturity is expressed by increasing seniority in lineage activities. Lineage seniority confers ritual leadership. It is also expressed

in the consultations which precede or mark betrothals, wakes, burials and entombments, baptisms, marriages, land transfers by inheritance and by other means. Progressive increases of seniority mark an individual's approach to the world of the ancestors. In the Big Drum dances which dramatise this ancestor cult most elaborately, only mature individuals may dance in ritual and old persons are the real leaders.

In Carriacou belief, the ancestors inhabit their graves and wander around their villages for forty days after their death. During this period the deceased may be seen by non-kin, and widows must mourn intensely. Thereafter, the dead may make further appearances in dreams when they give "messages", which must always be observed, to any mature person in their village. Often these dreams are requests for "food", that is, for sacrifice or *saraca*, as it is locally called. A person's descendants remain obliged to provide these periodic *saraca*, as well as the anniversary "plate of food", until their dead ancestor has been properly tombed at a "stone-feast" or final funeral rite. Thereafter, the deceased will only help his or her descendants and need no longer be feared.

In such a society, aged heads of families have highest status. From this group are drawn the lineage and community elders as well as the ritual leaders. Their power of ritual curses together with their control of such resources as land, houses, boats or vessels, seine-nets, shops, or cattle, provide these old men with an additional authority which strengthens their kinship position. In consequence, status assignments in Carriacou diverge radically from those in "class-stratified" societies. In Carriacou males have precedence over females, and the old have precedence and authority over the young, whatever the difference in their local wealth or overseas achievements.

THE KINSHIP SYSTEM

Carriacou society contains three basic units: the community, the lineage and the household. Communities are local units, distinguished by names, boundaries (largely those of old estates), founding family lines, and economic and social interests. Most communities have their own common and water-hole, which they keep in good condition by "maroons" or turnouts of their young men for free group work. In addition, most communities hold their own community sacrifices, as during a drought, or after the maize harvest in August, or on the occasion of some significant economic event, such as a large catch by the local seine, the setting out of a schooner after careening, a launching, a house-opening or the like. Within a community, senior persons may receive dream-messages for some unrelated neighbour. Within communities also, we find the highest degree of marriage and extra-marital mating, the most frequent exchange of labour or goods, the greatest density of share-cropping, share-tending and similar arrangements, and generally the greatest intensity of social life. In the long dry seasons, each community tends to celebrate its own series of secular dances, known as bouquet or company dances. Formerly communities used to play one another at cricket;

unable to afford the necessary gear in recent years, they now compete in dominoes and similar games by selected teams at formal visits, and on St. Peter's day, the great fête for Carriacou, by boat-races at the island capital, Hillsborough.

Each community contains two or more large and solidary groups of kin. At L'Esterre, we find two distinct groups of Josephs, and another Bristol line; at Belmont South and Harvey Vale, we find the Gays, the Gabriels, the Billys and Bedeaus. At Six Roads, the Cudjoes, Raymonds and another branch of Josephs are prominent. Kinship groups of similar scale and organisation which are associated with various other communities of the island include the Georges, the Noels, the Quashies, the Johns, the Alexises, etc.

These large kinship groupings are referred to as "bloods." A blood is a body of agnatic kin within a range of four generations. Within this range, mating and marriage are both prohibited. Bloods are exogamous lineage groups. Children of second cousins who are agnates may marry; their parents may not. When these marriages occur the parents belong to one common blood, while their children belong to separate bloods descended from their respective great-grandfathers. In other words, beyond the fourth generation, bloods are continually being differentiated even though their senior living generations remain members of their original units. Thus, the progressive differentiation of these lineages as inter-marrying units takes place within a wider framework based on the lineage to which the fathers and grandfathers belonged; the resultant segmentation requires a further three generations after exogamy lapses for complete separation of the bloods undergoing such change. In consequence, we can describe agnatic groups, whose junior members may marry, while their seniors are bound by the exogamic rule, as "linked bloods". Bloods linked through their seniors in this way may be settled within one or more communities. Generally, these lineage linkages cross community bounds. Linked bloods participate in one another's ritual events by right and duty, and in these rituals the linkage is reaffirmed and maintained for years after the death of those "old parents" who belonged to the original lineage.

Within the four-generation range of agnatic kinship, bloods are ritually independent as well as exogamous. Each such unit recognises its oldest living male as the head, but headship exercises influence rather than authority and knowledge rather than power. The head and his peers have fullest knowledge of the kinship connections among various families in their own and other neighbouring communities. They are the special custodians of ritual lore, of local history, and land transactions, of wills and the lineage genealogy; they must therefore approve marriage proposals, and they must be consulted about any dream-messages which require sacrifice so that remoter ancestors may be correctly identified. They also supervise the lineage cemeteries, although each only owns that graveyard which keeps his ancestors. By these tombstones genealogical connections can be traced, and to this evidence points in doubt or dispute are referred.

A sacrifice must be held before a man can live in the new home built with his earnings oversea. This rite begins with a sacrifice at the home of his father or grandfather and then moves to the new site. On such occasions the lineage seniors have important roles, and their participation confirms the householder in his new status as a mature member of the lineage group. Later when the stone-feast for the entombment of his father is held, the householder again provides a sacrifice in which his lineage seniors have leading roles.

Despite their relatively shallow depth, and the continual loss of their members through emigration, bloods are important units of the communities to which they belong. At L'Esterre village for instance, one of the Joseph bloods contains the principals of 11 households while another Joseph blood includes 4, and the Bristols are principals in 8 households. Together these three lineages account for one-third of the households in this community. If we include another three lineages, we should account for more than half of the community members. Between these large kinship groupings, both marriages and extra-marital matings occur often, with the result that most persons born in a Carriacou village have large numbers of their mother's and father's kin living close at hand, even those begotten in extra-marital matings.

There is a fair degree of inter-village mating in Carriacou, but rather less movement of persons from one village to another, except at marriage which is predominantly virilocal in this context, and neolocal within villages. Emigrants may remain abroad permanently, nonetheless retaining their community attachments. If they return it is almost certainly to their native village. Movements of men into other villages in the island are not so frequent a basis for inter-village lineage linkages as the non-domestic inter-village matings, under the conventions of which the children remain with their mother and her kin.

The Carriacou patrilineage is rationalized by a dogma of conception. According to this dogma, a child takes its blood from the father only. Women cannot pass on their blood to their children. "With women, the blood finish." However by the fourth generation the original common blood has become so weakened that intermarriage involves no risk of ill-health or incest. "Women only *bear* children, men *make* them." "A cow cannot have a calf unless it visit the bull." In consequence, children belong to their father's blood; and "the children of two sisters, they are not relative, they only style themselves relative; your only relative are your father's family." For this reason marriage occasionally occurs between the children of a brother and sister. The marriage of two ortho-cousins, or of agnatic first-cousins once removed, who are described as second cousins in Carriacou, is forbidden by the lineage exogamy which this theory of conception supports.

A man may have children by two women who are close agnatic kin without thereby contravening the lineage principle or the local moral code. But

a woman who has children for two men belonging to the same exogamous blood is classified as "a prostitute" in Carriacou, and her shame is greatest when the fathers are full siblings. Although the fathers of these children become ritually unclean by their relation with the woman, they do not suffer anything like the intense opprobrium which is her lot thereafter. "Is the owner of the hen response for the hen, and not the owner of the cock."

Yet despite this emphasis on patriline in the social organization, maternal relatives are always important, and they may often be better known than lineage kin. When a man has children by a woman who lives in another community, these children will generally remain with their mother, being brought up among her kin. Under such circumstances, children know their mother's family rather better than their father's. However, even in conditions of this sort, we find that the average individual's knowledge of his father's genealogy far exceeds that of his mother's in depth and range.

Kinship terms, whether in English or in the local creole language, are bilateral in their application and descriptive rather than classificatory. Within the same generation differences of age are marked by the junior's use of address terms such as cousin or brother when speaking to his senior. There may once have been avoidance of the names of paternal grandparents, but at present there is no such observance. Wives of a person's father's brothers or paternal uncles are addressed and referred to as aunt (*tante* or *tan*); but extra-domestic mates of father's brother are referred to as "cousins". The widest range of collaterality recognised in Carriacou coincides with the furthest span of lineage kinship. All agnates of the same generation in linked bloods are cousins reciprocally. Generation differences are expressed by such terms as *Pa*, *Ma*, *Nonc* or *Tante*. First names are in common use, together with the individual's nicknames in Romance Creole or English. Relationships persist however long may be the separation through emigration. The ritual obligations of emigrants are important in maintaining familial bonds and contact. In a population of 1595 persons which I studied at Harvey Vale in 1953, 538 were then overseas, but only the whereabouts of 6 individuals remained uncertain.⁴

In Carriacou folk address and refer to one another in various ways, but generational and kinship seniorities are usually included. A man may call his father's brother's wife, sister or *se*, adding her nickname, as "Se-Shining," in imitation of her children. Or he may call her *tante* using her proper Christian name, which is not hidden in Carriacou as it is in Grenada. Sometimes it is hard to distinguish between true and nicknames as the local folk lavish considerable talent on the naming of their own and other people's children. Thus we come across men called Propeller George, Gay Gay, King Gabriel, Gabriel Gabriel, Feeling (Philip?) Plenty, and the like. Nicknames in Creole are more common for women, such as Popo Dulé, Fiji, Se-Shining, etc. In

⁴Smith, M. G., "The Transformation of Land Rights by Transmission in Carriacou," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1956. University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, pp. 103-138.

addition, we often find widows or married women referred to by their maiden or lineage names.

Surnames or "titles" are taken from the father, whatever the status of the mating relation. But the bloods are quite distinct from patrilineal name-groups. It sometimes happens that a man adopts his wife's child by some former mate for lack of his own offspring, and in such case the child will generally take the name and inheritance of its adopted parent. It nonetheless remains a member of the lineage of its biological father. Conversely, a man's children who live apart from him with their mothers in his village or elsewhere remain members of his blood, having ritual and other rights and obligations in it. Fathers have unavoidable ritual duties which must be discharged on behalf of their children, and these ritual obligations dramatize and bolster the secular and economic aspects of paternity, ensuring that men will claim all children whose parentage is not genuinely in doubt.

When a man is asked to give his genealogy, he generally begins with his blood, and states their relations, histories and whereabouts in considerable detail. Regarding his matri-kin he is at once less thorough and less conversant, giving his mother's father's kin, and perhaps his mother's paternal grandfather's kin in greater or less detail. The mother's mother may be mentioned, but without further information about her collateral relatives. There is indeed an impressive and general difference in the depths of knowledge which individuals possess about their agnates and matri-kin, even when they were brought up away from their fathers. At wakes, baptisms, marriage ceremonies, sacrifices to mark the establishment of a new household, annual prayer meetings to remember the dead, funeral ceremonies such as those on All Souls' Night, *saraca* at the request of the dead, burials or stone-feasts, agnates are brought together and thus renew their sense of lineage, and knowledge of those bonds and obligations which serve to distinguish them as a unit from other like units in the island society.

In referring to affinal relatives, Carriacou folk use such terms as "step-mother" or "mother-in-law" interchangeably, although the latter is rather more common. Many of these affinal relations are extra-marital, and most of these latter are extra-residential also. A man calls the woman whose daughter has borne children for him by the same term as he calls his wife's mother. Likewise he calls the man for whom his daughter has borne children by the same term as he calls her husband. A man refers to his extra-residential mate as my "keptress" or "kept girl". He refers to and addresses her brothers as "brothers-in-law". A man's wife may address his extra-domestic mate as "wife" half in jest. A man distinguishes between his lawful or legitimate and unlawful or illegitimate children. He distinguishes his "home" children, who are usually legitimate, from "outside" children, who live in other homes, and are usually illegitimate. Since women generally keep their unlawful children as well as their lawful issue, they do not use the distinction between home and outside issue which is met with among men; and they generally distin-

guish their children by the fathers' names, rather than by differences of birth-status.

Between the blood and the individual household, we find an intermediate unit based on siblingship. The significance and size of this grouping varies over time and between families in response to such factors as age, dispersion and sex of its members, full- and half-siblingship, death and the like. But wherever we find adult siblings living near one another in Carriacou, they form a distinctive social group, the widest kinship unit within which economic and social services are given or exchanged on a regular and recurrent basis. There neither is nor can be any particular and uniform pattern for such cooperation. In consequence, one sometimes finds siblings who are notorious for their continual quarrelling. I knew three groups of this sort, and all were composed of women only. This may be purely accidental, but it is remarkable that the many groups of siblings which include or consisted of males were all models of goodwill. Perhaps the disagreements within these groups of sisters reflected the interest differentiations arising through their marriages; and the conflicts to which they gave prompt, regular, and highly audible expression may have expressed the conflicting claims of families of orientation and procreation, or the opposition between women's roles as mothers and wives on the one hand, or sisters and daughters on the other. All groups of dissenting sisters known to me had a common interest in inherited land, and rights in this land figured most frequently in their quarrels. Under such circumstances, cooperation in domestic or ritual undertakings was rare indeed; and in this particular also, the contrast with groups containing brothers is instructive.

Brothers never live together in adult life. Nor do we find a man living with his sister, either as household head or dependent. In the Carriacou social code, a man must build his house, wed, and rear his family within it. Only so may he win recognition as a worthwhile person, or qualify for seniority in the lineage and community status systems. Thus brothers live apart, each with his wife and family. Their mutual cooperation involves inter-household exchanges of labour, supplies, money, and services of various kinds. In its ritual aspect, this sibling group acts as a unit at the anniversary masses or prayer meetings which are held in honour of dead parents. At these prayer meetings the eldest sister may be in charge of preparing the sacrifice, if it is held in her home; but sacrifices which include the Big Drum dance will be held at the home of the eldest brother. The eldest brother has charge of the parental cemetery, and he leads the group in preparations for their parents' entombment. At such events as weddings, baptisms, births, deaths or the ritual first shearing of the curly hair from a new-born child, the solidarity of siblings is again demonstrated. Within this group also counsel is taken about proposals for betrothal or arrangements for marriage, about the partition, trusteeship, or temporary allocation of inherited land, about the siting of homesteads, the emigration or apprenticeship of near kin, and im-

portant economic activities such as farming, fishing, sailing, and the like. Brothers send their wives and children to aid their siblings, and help freely in building or repairing boats and homes. Siblings adopt one another's orphaned children most freely, and are in and out of one another's homes incessantly. Under such circumstances, children learn to respect the opinions and authority of their father's siblings as they do the fathers themselves. The mother's siblings being less evident in their father's households, and perhaps more distant also, are less recognisable by the child as a separate solidary group.

The sibling unit includes half- as well as full-siblings. Where all were brought up together in a common home, there is a degree of solidarity in adult life which can hardly be distinguished from that found between full-siblings, except for the differences of parenthood expressed at separate anniversary sacrifices. Sometimes we find a group of full-brothers with a maternal half-sister operating in the same way as a group of full-siblings. Units of this constitution illustrate the importance of women within sibling groups. Since a man's wife remains a member of her father's blood, however closely identified with him through common family interests, her husband depends on his sisters for female help in ritual and secular kinship affairs. In consequence, men enjoy warm relations with their brothers, and with their sisters, mothers and wives. An emigrant will leave his home and land in the care of his parents or siblings. Siblings will assist one another in trade, with food or labour. Sisters will sometimes take their brother's children into their homes. The more fortunate brother will give the less fortunate his own home when he can build another. Between brothers, seniority by age is the basis of seniority and leadership, although personal skills and factors are taken into account. A man jokes with his brother's wife quite freely, although there is no formal joking relation as such. Men help their brothers' widows as best they can.

THE ORGANIZATION OF MATING

We have seen that there are over twice as many females as males among the resident population of Carriacou. This sex disparity is mainly due to the emigration of males, and to the absence at sea of many sailors for longer or shorter periods. Heavy male migration is in part due to the lack of employment opportunities in the island. It is also regulated by the cultural ideals of marriage and maturity among males. The essential precondition of male maturity in Carriacou is marriage, and the precondition of marriage is the establishment of one's independent homestead. To earn the money for building and maintaining their homes, young men spend long years abroad. Some never return. Some return to marry, and may then emigrate again with their wives and families, or with their wives only, or simply on their own. Those who leave their wives in the island almost always return within a few years, investing their savings locally to provide for their families' future.

As a result of these patterns, 92.4 per cent of male household heads in Carriacou are or have been married. Only 5.4 per cent have or are engaged in consensual cohabitation without being married, and the remaining 4.2 per cent are males of lifelong single status. Of the total adult male population of this sample, 37.5 per cent were below the age of 24 years, and none of these had yet married. Of the remaining 62.5 per cent of this adult male population, 44.4 per cent had at some time been married. Of these, 40 per cent lived with their wives, 3.4 per cent were widowers, and only 1.0 per cent had absent spouses. These figures show how very close are the correlations between marriage and household headship among the male residents of Carriacou, and the high incidence of marriage among men above 24 years of age.⁵

Of the adult female population of this sample, 27 per cent were below the age of 24 years, and very few of these had yet married. Of the remaining 73 per cent, 29 per cent were married at the time of this survey, and a further 15 per cent were widows. Of those women who were married at the time of the survey, more than one in four had absent spouses, and almost all of these were heads of their own households. In only one case was a woman head of the household which contained her husband. Six of the 224 households in this sample contained young couples living in homes of which one of their parents was the head. Five of these anomalous cohabitations were based on marriage, the husbands living in homes of which their wife's mothers were heads.

Less than 5 per cent of the female household heads of this sample were below the age of 39, and 38.2 per cent of these female household heads were persons of lifelong single status, at least one-half of these latter being single mothers also. Only one-tenth of the young women in this sample below the age of 24 were single mothers. Of the total number of female household heads, 45 per cent were widows, and another 14.5 per cent were women whose husbands are absent. In short, marriage is associated with male maturity and household headship; but many women who have never married live with their issue in homes of which they are head.

Granted the extreme sexual imbalance of this population and the strong cultural pressures towards the early marriage of males, those women without husbands must either emigrate, reconcile themselves to their single status with its lifelong chastity, or accept single motherhood. With such degrees of sexual disparity and emigration, the island-society would hardly be able to maintain its numbers under any organization of mating which condemned its surplus women to permanent chastity. On the other hand, the simple size of the surplus female population necessitates some firm regulation of these extra-marital relations if the population is to have an orderly family system.

It is of course unlikely that the Carriacou population developed their pre-

⁵The numbers and ratios mentioned here are taken from a survey of 224 households in four Carriacou villages which I conducted in 1953. This sample represents one-seventh of the island's population.

sent mating organization as a deliberate adjustment to these conditions. Probably the female surplus produced by the initial emigration provided problems and opportunities which have tended to become increasingly patterned and conventionalised over the generations. Moreover, since the initial Carriacou emigration occurred simultaneously with the adoption of marriage by the islanders, the integration of their alternative forms of mating and family may have developed gradually through progressive adjustments of these alternatives to one another.

Nowadays, we find that all men are expected to marry and live in their own households. By and large these expectations are fulfilled. The surplus women are thus available as extra-residential mates of these married men or of other single men in the island. However, as already shown, young women below the age of 24 rarely have children in Carriacou, and then only as a rule for men formally betrothed to them. Consensual cohabitation is ruled out by this system of mating regulation. Only 3.1 per cent of the 224 household heads were principals of this form of union. In Carriacou society, any unwed woman who lives in a "board" (wooden) house with a man to whom she is not married is a prostitute. Very few single women place themselves in this position; but a childless woman separated from her husband may take another partner into her wooden home. Usually, couples who cohabit consensually live in the daub and wattle huts which go by the name of "women's houses," in contradistinction with buildings of wood or concrete ("board houses"), which are described as "men's houses." Almost always a couple cohabiting consensually in a "dirt" house plan to marry as soon as they earn the money to put up the two-room "board" structure which is the minimum prerequisite of married life in Carriacou. Almost always these unmarried couples who enter this form of cohabitation do so in response to pressures from the woman's parents and kin, who threaten to dissolve the relation unless the couple live together while preparing for marriage. Under such circumstances, the woman will usually build herself a small house on or near her parents' home and land, and her mate loses esteem until he is married and lives in his own home. In other words, among the Carriacou folk, consensual cohabitation is rare. When it occurs it is either a prelude to marriage or an adjustment after a broken marriage, and in either event it is disapproved; it is neither statistically nor culturally equivalent to marriage nor is it its alternative.

The Carriacou alternative to marriage for women is single status. For men there is no alternative, except perhaps emigration. For single women, there is freedom of choice with regard to mating. Those who do not wish to mate are free to remain celibate. Others may mate extra-residentially, and their partners in such non-domestic unions are more often than not drawn from the married men in the island. In other words, married men often have two or more mates, their wives living with them, while their "keptresses" remain in their own homes or with their parents and kin. For men therefore, mar-

riage and the extra-residential relation are complementary, and marriage is obligatory, while the other is not. For women however, the extra-residential relation is the only alternative to lifelong continence *after* they have lost the chance to wed. Very occasionally we find an old widower marrying some middle-aged spinster who has already had children by various men; such marriages are also disapproved, and they are so rare that the women who enter their thirties without immediate prospects of marriage generally resign themselves to extra-domestic mating relations or none at all.

Under the Carriacou regulation of mating, young girls may not reply to the addresses of their suitors without the permission of their parents or household heads. In such situations the proper conduct is for the young woman to inform her suitor that he should write to her guardians or parents if he wishes to speak to her, and declare his intentions. These letters of betrothal must be addressed to the young woman's father if she lives with him, to her mother who must show them to her father if the latter lives elsewhere, or to the head of the household in which the young woman lives, if she lives with neither parent. Betrothals are normally arranged by the girl's father or kinsmen. They discuss the proposal with her lineage and other kin before meeting the boy's parents formally for further discussion.

If the girl's guardians disapprove of the young man or his "intentions" as set out in his letter, they make no reply, but instruct the young woman to have nothing further to do with the man in question. Since the young woman's disobedience may entail ejection from her home, or a thrashing and scolding, and uncertainty about the paternity of any children from the liaison, she will generally observe her parents' requests. In addition the senior woman of the household in which she lives is expected to watch the girl's movements closely and to keep her busy and out of harm's way. This means forbidding her to go out in the evenings unescorted to dances or similar meetings. Young women under such control appear in public mainly at wakes, prayer meetings and *nine-night* rites for the newly dead, when sex relations are taboo among participants.

If the betrothal offer is a fair and acceptable one, the parents of both parties meet to discuss the date and arrangements for marriage, including the boy's emigration and prospects oversea. These details being settled, the young man will then be given permission to visit the girl in her home at set times on week-days which are known as 'Visiting days'; and the girl will be instructed on no account to listen to any proposals from other men. These courting visits are supervised by the girl's guardians, whose roles as parents or persons *in loco parentis* include obstructing the young man's attempts "to enjoy the girl's facilities." In due course, the will finds a way, unless the young man departs overseas soon after the betrothal. But if the girl is "in-pregnant" for her betrothed and there is no doubt about the paternity of her offspring, the engagement is strengthened rather than otherwise, since the young man now has a family to care for, and since the girl's parents will

inc
l
ab
can
inc
sew
des
sinc
mu
Gir
fir
may
own
Y
own
out
ava
thei
if t
few
who
mat
U
live
fami
child
child
thei
that
mar
in h
their
Th
fin
faith
in m
marri
forms
other
A r
mone
paym
6Thi
6cation

increase their demands for an early fulfilment of the marriage commitment.

Few young women in Carriacou dare to disregard their parents' commands about their sexual conduct. These parental commands are usually based on careful observations of the girl's behaviour, and therefore tend to fit her inclinations. But the consequences of disobedience by the girl are sufficiently severe to control her actions even where her parents' wishes contradict her desires. This is especially true of young women who live with their fathers, since the latter's curse and ejection means virtual banishment from the community and the island. Notably, I could find no instance of such an event. Girls living with their mothers occupy a stronger position, and although at first they must obey their mothers' wishes, by the time they are 24 they may be sufficiently independent economically and socially to manage their own mating affairs.

Young women below the age of 24 hardly ever set up households of their own. Nor can they enter consensual domestic unions of their own will without characterising themselves as prostitutes. In addition, there are no quarters available for rent in this island, and the solidarity of senior kinsfolk with their parents will be expressed by exclusion from the homes of their kin, if they are ejected from that of their parents. In consequence, there are few single mothers in Carriacou below the age of 24; after that age, women whose marital prospects are not promising arrange their own extra-residential matings freely, and several of them soon become heads of their own homes.

Under the Carriacou definition of marriage, husbands, wives and children live as units in households of which the men are heads, and the elementary families are either the core or the total unit. But married men often have children by other women who live outside their homes, and these outside children remain in their mother's care and control. Men can rarely bring their outside children into their homes, since the latter's mothers object that their mate's wife may "not treat the child right". In consequence, married men generally have two families, one of which lives with them in homes of which they are themselves the heads, while the other lives with their extra-residential mates or with the kin of these women.

The relation between extra-residential mates in Carriacou is clearly defined. The relation continues so long as the woman concerned is sexually faithful to the man. There is no difference between the definition of adultery in marriage or extra-residential unions among the Carriacou folk. In neither marriage nor the extra-residential union can men commit adultery; in both forms of mating, adultery denotes sexual infidelity by the woman with other males.⁶

A man gives his extra-residential mate what assistance he can, in labour, money or commodities. These transfers are in no wise to be mistaken for payments. They are the normal exchanges between kin, and are by no means

⁶This qualification is not irrelevant. Lesbianism is current in Carriacou, but its classification as adulterous or otherwise is obscure.

one-way transfers. On his visits, the non-resident mate will probably have a meal prepared by his "keptress", who may also perform other minor domestic functions intermittently for him, apart from rearing his offspring. Even if the relation breaks down temporarily or for good through the man's emigration or the woman's unfaithfulness, he will continue to contribute towards the maintenance of his children in cash and kind, albeit irregularly, as best he can. The parental roles which arise through extra-residential unions are clearly defined so as to be consistent with the other alternatives of mating and parenthood which together form a single, self-perpetuating system of family relations. Ritual values underlie this system as they do other aspects of Carriacou life; and men are under ritual obligations to claim their offspring by extra-residential matings at birth, and to contribute freely as best they can to their maintenance thereafter.

My enquiries revealed that these extra-residential relations are often highly stable and fertile unions. Many of them persist for several years, and give rise to several children. The sole child of a couple is evidence of an early breach in their relation, or of an unintended conception, and is not the norm for unions of this sort. When a man seduces a woman, their offspring is described as a "child in passing, nothing to speak of", and is distinguished sharply from the "outside family," which includes the mother when she is an extra-residential mate. In the Carriacou code, "gentlemen" give women liberal cash payments after seducing them, and their paternal responsibilities are adjusted to these and other conditions of the affair. In this society, women who let themselves be seduced before defining their new relation formally are apt to have no such relation at all, but to participate only in a series of casual love affairs, and to bear socially fatherless children, no man admitting paternity. That only 5 children in a sample of more than 200 at L'Esterre had an obscure paternity indicates the generality of stable mating relations among the Carriacou folk and the willingness of men to claim and maintain their offspring.

The control which a man exercises over those of his children who live with him is much wider and stronger than that which he claims over those who live in their mother's home or with her kin. In the extra-residential union, the principal burden of parenthood falls squarely on the woman, and in consequence she claims the primary right to control the children and to guide their future. In practice, single mothers can decide with whom to leave their children if they themselves are going abroad or wish to marry and leave their children with their kin.

On the data which I collected, 30.6 per cent of all children living apart from both their parents were found in the homes of their patri-kin, while 63 per cent lived with their matri-kin, and the remainder with persons not connected to them biologically. One-third of those children living with their father's or mother's kin apart from both parents were legitimate. This sample shows that an approximately equal number of children also live with one

or o
live
7 p
or v
the
ever
their
hous
basis
offsp
tend

Ev
porta
all t
kinsh
early
and
their
tices
woul
of h
famil
to h
consi
the c
is ess

We
peopl
dicat
and v

Sin
many
find
in thi
lish t
Conse
years
stanti
Sin
the e
house

or other of their parents apart from the other. Of these latter, 93 per cent live with their mother only or with their mother and mother's kin. Only 7 per cent are found living apart from their mothers with their father alone or with their father and his kin. In each case approximately one-third of the children who live apart from one or both parents are legitimate. However, a rather larger number of children live in homes which contain both their parents, and about 95 per cent of these are legitimate issue of the male household heads. From such data, we can see that marriage is the general basis for the co-residence of elementary families, and that the illegitimate offspring of extra-residential unions and more casual forms of sex relation tend to remain with their mothers or mother's kin.

Even so, their father's recognition and roles are both obligatory and important. Under lineage and ritual norms alike, men are obliged to claim all those children for whom they are without doubt responsible. By the kinship rituals during pregnancy of the mother, at birth, baptism, and in early childhood, these paternal relations are sacralized, affirmed, dramatized and given lineage recognition. By the time such children reach adolescence, their father's authority is clear and explicit. The father will arrange apprenticeship or employment aboard some vessel for his outside son just as he would for his "home children". He will supervise the betrothal negotiations of his outside daughter in the same way that he does for his domestic family; and it is at once improper and unwise for the girl's mother to try to handle these negotiations herself, since young men in Carriacou have considerable skill in preparing fair but misleading proposals. Likewise, at the confirmation, marriage or death of his "outside" children, a man's role is essentially the same as for those who live in the home.

THE DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION

We have now described the lineage and mating systems of the Carriacou people, and their demographic and ritual peculiarities have also been indicated. With this background, the domestic organization is easily set forth and understood.

Since men are heavily outnumbered by women in this island, and since many of the senior women are widows or wives with absent husbands, we find more households with female heads than are under males. Moreover, in this social organization, young people find it especially difficult to establish their own households, except by previous emigration in early adulthood. Consequently, we find that the majority of household heads are over 55 years of age, the average age of the female household heads being substantially above that of the males.

Since the basis of domestic units of which males are heads is usually the elementary family founded on marriage, we find that 38 in every 41 households which have male heads are based on the latter's cohabitation.

Of these, 6 contain childless couples, that is, couples whose children have already left their homes, or those who have never had any children of their own. A further 24 contain elementary families of the head, either as exclusive domestic units, or including various accretions, mostly affines of the head. The remainder contain grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the cohabiting pair, with or without the children. Only 3 out of 41 households with male heads contain individuals who live by themselves or with non-kin.

For every 41 households with male heads, there are approximately 59 with female heads in this island. Since cohabitation entails male headship of the household, we do not expect to find many cases of cohabitations in households with female heads. Moreover since widows and wives with absent husbands retain headship of their homes, and since many single mothers live in units of which they are head, a fairly substantial proportion of those units with female heads will consist of women and their children only, or of women and their grandchildren, with or without their children. In every 59 households with female heads, approximately 11.6 contain the heads and their children only, with or without accretions; another 6 contain women and their grandchildren only, without their children; and 21 contain women, their children, and their grandchildren or great-grandchildren. Approximately 17 households in every 59 with female heads consist of women who live alone or with members of marginal kinship categories. Only 2 households of every 59 with female heads contain adult siblings of the head.

We have seen that in Carriacou men build the homesteads which women inherit in their roles as wives or daughters. Moreover, by or shortly after their marriage, men are principals in two families, one of which lives with them while the other is sited elsewhere in the homes of their mates or mates' kin. These dual family relations and roles impose correspondingly heavy obligations on married men; and perhaps the lapse of extra-residential relations — which by no means affects the status of the extra-residential family, ritually or otherwise — is most often due to the man's increasing inability to discharge the minimum economic commitments consistent with the maintenance of these sets of relationships. The simple pressure of these dual family responsibilities on the adult men of Carriacou tends to prevent all but those of fair means from accepting domestic responsibilities for their collaterals, with the possible exception of their siblings' children. In addition, the dual organization of mating and family relations presupposes that each man will maintain his own mates and families independently. This pre-supposition emphasises the economic and social independence of agnatic kin, especially as regards the familial and mating relations of males. In short, men neither accommodate their children by extra-residential mates in their own homes, nor will they normally accommodate those of their collateral kin, so long as the latter's parents are living in the island.

Excluding the heads themselves, approximately 19 per cent of the population resident in homes with male heads are the wives or mates of these men, and another 66.4 per cent are their issue by these heads. Of the remaining 14.6 per cent, 13.0 per cent are issue or kin of the resident mates of these household heads. Resident collaterals of male household heads are no more frequent in these homes than are adopted persons. In short, besides accepting responsibility for his resident mate and their joint issue, the Carriacou male also accepts responsibility for the accommodation of his mate's issue by former unions and some of her kin in his home, at the same time that he is obliged by the mating and kinship organization to exclude his own kin and issue by other unions.

A detailed analysis of the constitution of the aggregate of persons linked by collateral kinship to female household heads, or to resident mates of male household heads in this sample of Carriacou homes, shows that 69 in a total of 88 such persons are linked through their mothers to the women with whom they live, and 57 of these are known to be illegitimate also. Thus materterine kinship⁷ is the primary basis for the domestic placement of collaterals in Carriacou; and the principals to whom these collaterals trace kinship are almost all female, some being heads of their own homes, while others live with their husbands. In addition, in this society illegitimacy presupposes extra-residential relations between the parents, and it is the prevailing birth-status of the resident collaterals. Thus men undertake to care for the illegitimate offspring of their wives' kinswomen in their own homes, while leaving their own illegitimate offspring in the homes of their mates or mates' kin.

Of the residents descended from the male household heads with whom they live, 85.8 per cent are their children, and of this total 75.5 per cent are known to be legitimate. Only 4.5 per cent are offspring of the sons of these household heads, and three in four of these are legitimate. The remaining 9.7 per cent are daughters' issue, equally distributed between the two birth-statuses. Of residents descended from female household heads, 50.6 per cent are the latter's children, and of these 19.5 per cent are known to be legitimate, the birth-status of an equal number was not clearly determined, and the remaining 11.6 per cent were unlawful. In addition, 14.6 per cent of these women's resident descendants were sons' issue, and more than one-half of these were illegitimate. Of the remaining 34.8 per cent who were daughters' issue, over 23.7 per cent were illegitimate. In other words, women often have illegitimate children by extra-residential unions while living in homes of which their mothers are heads. We have already indicated the difficulties which face young women in Carriacou when they wish to establish their own households. Usually, single women

⁷See Schapera, Isaac, "Marriage of Near Kin Among the Tswana," *Africa*, Vol. 27, 1957, pp. 139-157. See p. 154, text and footnote 2. Schapera says "... I use this term (from Latin, *matertera*, maternal aunt), for cousins whose mothers are sisters." I extend the reference to include persons whose mothers or maternal grandmothers were sisters or the children of sisters.

acquire houses and headship by inheritance from their parents, and normally from their mother. During the latter's declining years, dependence on her adult daughters increases continuously, and this maternal dependence confers corresponding independence and maturity on the child. Moreover, since women usually express their independence by arranging their mating relations themselves it follows that, as their mothers age, resident daughters are more and more likely to mate extra-residentially whether or not they are betrothed.

Of the dependents living in homes with female heads, 75.9 per cent are lineal issue of the heads themselves. Of the remaining 24.1 per cent, 18.0 per cent are collateral kin of these women, 15.8 per cent of them being siblings or their issue, while 0.3 per cent are parents. A further 2.5 per cent consist of resident mates or spouses of the children or dependents of these female household heads; 1.2 per cent are adopted persons, and only 0.2 per cent are unrelated. In Carriacou the household is a unit exclusively based on kinship ties.

We have seen that men in Carriacou tend to die before their wives, and that their sons are obliged to demonstrate capacity for marriage by building their own houses, thereby leaving the homes in which their parents lived to their sisters, "as a hospital," in the local phrase. In addition, marriage is extremely stable in this society, and very few unions with this basis terminate before widowhood. The adultery of wives is unheard of, but Lesbianism is common, senior women taking the male role with younger ones as their mates.

The intense supervision of girls who live with both their parents ensures a low illegitimacy rate among children of resident daughters of male household heads. However, during their mother's widowhoods or while living with their unwed mothers or materterine kin, young women may enter into extra-residential relations independently or with their mother's approval, and these unions tend to be fertile if they endure. Even though in many Carriacou homes containing women, the daughters and daughters' issue were originally based on the marriage of their heads and can be regarded as residues of units formerly containing elementary families, many others, which have maintained their identity despite changes in their composition due to birth and emigration, have never contained elementary families and are never likely to do so under the Carriacou regulation of mating.

Of the total number of households studied in this island, 19.7 per cent contained single persons living alone or with others not linked to them by ties of mating, parenthood, filiation or siblingship. A further 1.8 per cent contained siblings only with or without their issue, all of these latter being under female heads. An additional 12.0 per cent of the total sample contained single parents and their children, almost all of these having female heads. Thus nearly one-third of the total sample of households contained no elementary families and could not be derived from them struc-

turally or developmentally. A further 6.7 per cent contained childless couples, and 25.9 per cent contained the household heads, and their grandchildren, with or without their children, most of these having female heads. It is obvious from this breakdown that approximately 40 per cent of the households in Carriacou are in no way derivable from domestic elementary family units; they owe their derivation and form to the duality of mating and parenthood among this population. Indeed, given such dual patterns of mating and elementary family organization, the domestic organization could hardly be otherwise.

Apart from these two major alternative forms of household group and their differing developments, it must be remembered that the composition of all units is subject to certain changes consequent on migration, death or the like. Sons tend to move out between their 20th and 24th years, though some remain. Daughters tend to stay put unless marrying or, more rarely, adventuring abroad unaccompanied. Occasionally daughters may bring their husbands or consensual mates to live in or near their parents' homes, usually at the latter's request in order to stabilize an uncertain relation. However, it is most unusual for a wife to live in the home of which her husband's mother is either a member or the head. Our sample contained only one instance of this sort in 224 households, and discussions revealed an unremitting opposition by both sexes to such arrangements.

Collateral kin of the female principals may have already been members of these households at their formation or when headship was transferred, or they may be subsequently introduced in adjustment to such changes as death or emigration. If male, these collaterals on achieving adult status are expected to set about preparing their own homes; if female to seek marriage.

Death, which places a man's household under his wife's headship, is rarely preceded by will-making in this island. It thus transfers a man's estate to his widow for her lifetime. Generally also, their father's death determines those sons who have not yet emigrated to do so, in search of the money with which to support their mother at home and to build their own homesteads. The girls remain behind, and if they do not succeed in marrying, they may contract a stable extra-residential relation which brings children into the home. During the widow's lifetime she allows her children to work the family land either without apportioning it or after an informal subdivision. After her death, the allocation current during her lifetime will continue with such adjustments as death and emigration enjoin. An analysis of land transfers on a Government land settlement after the lapse of two generations reveals the normative nature of these intestate distributions and the complexity of the arrangements to which they give rise.⁸ Though men must build their own homes and fend for their families, they willingly allow their unwed sisters to occupy the family homestead and use the family land. However, disputes occasionally arise between men and their wed sisters, especially where the values at stake are considerable. An ingenious argument

⁸See Smith, M. G., 1956, *op. cit.*

is common in such situations, the brother claiming that his sister on her marriage by taking another surname (title) lost her title to the estate, while the sister correctly replies that changes of title are not changes of blood.

Men occasionally make their sons' portions double those left to their married daughters; but any departure from the norms of equal division requires the preparation of a will. Men will leave house-spots to their "outside" children, and perhaps small parcels of land, orally or by will. Otherwise, the illegitimate offspring is expected to press his claim directly with the legitimate co-heirs, and often receives little for his pains. Since men are expected to provide for their wives, only men and single women are urgently in need of land and other inherited resources. However, since women through inheritance and their brothers' emigration generally acquire control of most of their parents' estate, they are in a better position to transmit land to their children of either birth-status than are their extra-residential mates. Inheritance from fathers is based on the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate issue; but all children of a woman have equal rights in her personal estate, whatever their birth-status. Indeed, on the evidence available to me, it appears that women with adequate land are less prone to wed than those without.

Within households based on cohabitation, the wife has exclusive charge of the kitchen with its store of peas, corn, and other garden crops in the smoky loft. This arrangement preserves both spouses against excessive demands for food crops from the husband's extra-residential mate and her issue. Both spouses examine the amounts removed from these stores for gifts to the kin of either, and wives may offer their husbands' portions to their outside families without being asked, or they may give something to their husbands' other children when these visit his home. What a man sells before bringing his catch or harvest home he keeps for his own use, together with the provisions or fish he has marketed, and the cash-income from crops such as cotton and groundnuts. (These latter yielded an average of £10 and £3 or £4 per producer in 1952 respectively.) That which he brings to his wife or mate is thereafter under her control. In households which contain women only, external marketing is carried out by the kinsmen or mates of the women, and most stores remain in the kitchen-loft under control of the household heads. Units with this female core depend heavily for cash income on young men abroad or in the island, who may be the sons of the senior females or the lovers of the younger ones; but they also receive considerable amounts of goods in kind from the close kin of their adult principals. Men have complete charge of the domestic labour force, and simply direct their wives and children as they will, to work with their kin or friends freely or for nominal wages. Men only undertake the heavier agricultural tasks, leaving the lighter but more tedious ones to their womenfolk, while they themselves are employed fishing, sailing, pasturing stock, making boats, nets, marketing or on other business.

In
ship
paren
choso
oblig
and t
But t
tend
relati
paren
A
make
affair
may
child
the g
age
far b
unim
paren
addre
while
rema
porat
the s
"bloo

In the context of this family organization and lineage system, ritual kinship has little significance, although it is universal in this population, godparents calling each other *macmé* and *compère*, the godmothers being chosen by the infant's mother, the godfathers by its genitor. Godparents are obliged to help the child with its costume for the confirmation service, and to offer it accommodation at home, should it become a homeless orphan. But the spread of lineage relations and the securities which these provide tend to deprive the godparent-godchild relation of wider significance, though relations between the child's parents and godparents, and among the godparents themselves, are warm and friendly.

A child must honour and obey its godparents and may not marry nor make love to the latter's children. Nor may godparents indulge in love affairs with one another or with the parents of their godchild. Godparents may select the child's Church name, unless otherwise instructed by the child's parents or grandparents. But in a society as classless as Carriacou, the godparent relationship serves no indirect functions as a mode of clientage or patronage, and the securities which it is intended to provide are far better discharged by the system of agnatic kinship. Indeed, the relative unimportance of *macmé* and *compère* relationships to the child and to its parents in Carriacou is only in part expressed by the use of these terms to address strangers of unknown name. Far more revealing is the fact that while *macmé* and *compère* are at Church baptising the child, the parents remain at home busy with the baptismal sacrifice and ritual which incorporates the new-born into their community and introduces him formally to the spirits of his dead ancestors, especially to the "old parents" of the "blood" to which he now belongs.

Haitian Rural Family Organization¹

By

REMY BASTIEN

I. INTRODUCTION

It is necessary to note from the start the relative paucity of anthropological and statistical materials on the subject of Haitian family organization. While decrees, laws and codes provide certain sorts of data, adequate analytical and descriptive monographs are largely lacking. Yet a solid knowledge of Haitian family life is a prime requisite for understanding the main problems which Haiti faces today: overpopulation, fragmentation of land holdings, and deficient agricultural production.

When Haiti broke from France after the devastating wars which began in 1791 and did not end till 1804, the task of building the new nation was a crushing one. It would have taxed the ability of the best prepared men, and of these Haiti had but few. The plantation system based on slave labour and responsible for the wealth of Saint-Domingue (as the French colony was known) was not compatible with the freedom won at high cost by the slaves. Toussaint l'Ouverture tried — and succeeded for a time before 1802 — to revive the large estates, but in the process he lost the loyalty and support of his countrymen. King Christophe (1807-1820) in his realm of the North met with a similar fate. In 1826, President Boyer (1818-1843) promulgated his Rural Code, aimed at tying the rural population to plantations owned mainly by city-dwellers. Its success was short-lived. Instead, more and more, the Haitian economy, based then as it is now upon agricultural production, grew around the family exploitation of small holdings.

The formation of that very family tradition is in itself a little-known process, and calls for close study on the part of local scholars. Writers of the colonial period, however favourable or unfavourable to the institution of slavery, were fully agreed on one point: it was hardly the ideal social climate for the growth of a family tradition. To its harshness were attributed the short life expectancy of the slave, the low childbirth rate, the sexual depravity and the lack of interest in legal unions among all social classes. To

¹This paper is based primarily on data collected in Marbial Valley during an ethnographic investigation carried on from April to October, 1948, in connection with the Fundamental Education Project of UNESCO, with a grant-in-aid from the Wenner-Gren Foundation. Supplementary data for other regions of Haiti and the urban centre of Port-au-Prince have been added where possible. Créole words are transcribed here in the "Laubach system," except where they appear in quotations from other authors. The *é* corresponds to the closed *é* in French, the *ê* to the open *ê*, the *o* to the closed *o*, and the *ô* to the open *o*. The *ou* is as in French. Nasalization is indicated by the circumflex *ˆ*. The *ch* corresponds to French *ch*, the *j* to French *z*. French words in the text are not italicized.

make matters worse, infanticide was a common occurrence. Between 1791 and 1803, prolonged fighting coupled with massacres and wholesale destruction of property probably contributed to the further obliteration of whatever family ties existed before the revolt. By 1804, migration and death had eliminated over 25 per cent of the 450,000 inhabitants recorded in 1789; the white element had practically disappeared and the remaining population was almost totally of African origin: Creole blacks born in the Colony, a minority of mulattoes and the *nèg bôsale* born in Africa, belonging to a variety of tribes and not yet welded together by any common culture.

The desire to encourage and reinforce family organization was strongly felt by Haiti's first rulers. Even before Independence, Toussaint l'Ouverture, in his Constitution of 1801, stressed this as a social need, promising the favours of the State to married couples and recommending the observance of a virtuous family life. Dessalines (1804-1806) while admitting divorce, nevertheless stressed in his Imperial Constitution of 1805 the advantages of marriage, and included among the qualities of all good citizens those of being "a good son, husband and father." The same recommendations are to be found in subsequent charters. With an inadequate clergy before 1860 to take care of moral education, the task of enforcing such good intentions fell wholly upon the administration which, more often than not, had a military character during the nineteenth century. That the articles of constitutions, rural codes, laws and decrees having to do with rural life and family organization had some effect is demonstrated by Haiti's broad cultural unity. Another force in achieving such an aim was the spread of the small property system, which began around 1807, and continued all through the century in spite of the official efforts to slow it. Haitian administration failed in many fields — health, education, communications, and financial stability — but considering the habits, knowledge, and conditions prevailing a century ago, the population succeeded in developing a viable social organization which helped to keep that small country alive and independent in times when the colonial ambitions of stronger nations were rampant.

Under the stern guidance of family heads, there developed in the rural areas an organization which, while adding little to the agricultural technique of colonial times expressed a deep cohesion, an effective use of available labour and a popular religious tradition. This was so in spite of weak central governments, frequent uprisings of the military, compulsory conscription in a chaotic army, and the absence of schools or adequate means of communication. Nowadays the shortcomings of the system are obvious and criticism easy. With some 10,000 square miles of territory, Haiti's population is fast reaching the four million mark, health conditions are poor, the illiteracy rate is at least 85 per cent, agricultural practices (while well adapted to the soil in some aspects) are conservative and routine, erosion in many places is too advanced to be checked, and governments are frequently both corrupt and incompetent. All these ills, coupled with a scarcity of natural resources

which could foster industrialization, make the future of the country a sombre one, to put it mildly. It is estimated that 90 per cent of the population of Haiti is rural and that agriculture, in which 75 per cent of the active inhabitants are engaged, contributes 75 per cent of the domestic product and means of support for eight-tenths of the population. The *per capita* income of the country is set at U.S. \$80 a year, but in most rural areas the figure is well below \$50. A substantial share of social privilege rests in the hands of a minority of French-speaking, mulatto city-dwellers. This situation has changed little since the dawn of Independence. Whether the land was ruled by the mulatto *élite* or by black generals, economic conditions did not favour the formation of a middle class. Since 1930 and at a quicker pace since 1946, elements from the black majority have been gaining ground in the economic and political fields, but, often, the gains reveal more the quest for personal and *clique* enhancement than for improvement of the nation as a whole. The underfed, illiterate peasant is still waiting for his revolution.

II. THE LAND

Located some 25 miles Southwest of Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti, the Valley of Marbial, seat of UNESCO's Fundamental Education Project (1948-1953), is in fact a complex of narrow valleys through which run small rivers and brooks with picturesque names — Cochon-Gras, Boucan-Patate, Fond-Melon — all of them tributaries of the larger Gosseline river. The junction of the Fond-Melon with the Gosseline is the focal point of the Valley, with Catholic and Protestant chapels, market place and schools. The nearest town, Jacmel, about eight miles south, plays a decisive role in the life of Marbial, being the port through which the coffee of the region is exported, the administrative centre of the area, and the "city" where the peasant borrows money, goes to court and seeks prestige relationships. But in spite of the distance and the wretched road between Port-au-Prince and Marbial, the capital city attracted the majority of the peasant women from the Valley who were engaged in the retail business. Jacmel's decline as a port of entry for foreign merchandise made the goods available there more expensive than in Port-au-Prince, from whence they came by road. Bent on keeping her profit as high as possible, a businesswoman would not hesitate to undertake the arduous four-day trip on foot to Port-au-Prince to replenish her supply of thread, glassware, matches, enamel plates and imported spices, perhaps to gather a profit of one dollar. (Cash, not time, has a meaning.)

The Valley of Marbial is very hilly, heavily eroded and with scanty vegetation, outside of the narrow strips of lowlands along the main rivers. About 1790, the Bassin of the Gosseline was thinly populated and its thick woods were ideal for the hunting of wild pigs, according to Baron de Wimpffen.

Today, the density of population is not below 125 per square kilometer as against 115 for the whole of Haiti (1950 Census). No exact figure of population exists for the Valley since it does not constitute a separate administrative unit, but includes in whole or in part a number of rural sections. For the area described here the population can be estimated at some 30,000, about 10 per cent of which are Protestants (Baptists in the majority), while the rest are Catholics. Literacy in 1950 stood at 5.6 per cent, exclusive of individuals below the age of 10; by 1953, at the close of the Fundamental Education Project, no decisive gain in literacy had been scored, and it is rather doubtful if today the percentage of illiteracy is any lower than the 85 per cent figure for the whole of Haiti.

Although yaws and malaria have been successfully fought, health conditions are still poor, with intestinal diseases responsible for a high infant mortality rate.

Traditionally, coffee has been the cash crop of the peasant, but land fragmentation, demographic pressure, and low prices for coffee are contributing to a decrease in its cultivation, in favour of food crops such as corn, plantain, sorghum, sweet potatoes, beans and manioc. While 82.7 per cent of the Marbial folk were owners of cultivated plots in 1950, no less than 94 per cent of them possessed only from half an acre to six acres of land. More and more, the minute size and decreasing yield of the plots force the poorer peasants to become sharecroppers and field hands or to migrate to the towns or abroad; in 1952, 217 male adults went to work in the canefields of the Dominican Republic.

III. THE HOUSEHOLD

There is no planned village in Marbial. The dwellings are sprinkled along the main pathways and on the hillsides, forming in places clusters of huts known as *lakou*, the residence unit of the large family. As is true of certain other social institutions in the area, the *lakou* is in decline, but in 1948 one was found which still included ten households with a total of twenty-seven members, all related, and belonging to three generations. Each household had its own straw-covered hut, its separate kitchen and a cement platform for drying the coffee beans. No plan was apparent in the location or orientation of the constructions, except that each hut was built upon the plot of land cultivated by its occupant. A father and his four sons held about two-thirds of the whole estate, while the rest was divided between the father's sister, two nephews, half-brother, and the concubine of one of the sons and her infant.

A *lakou* grows out of the continuous occupation of the same land by one family. While this applies primarily to the rural area, it does not exclude the existence of the same phenomenon in urban centres. In Port-au-Prince, a number of places bearing the name of ancient families are called *lakou* and are known to see the periodical gatherings of kinsmen in order to fulfill

their obligations to the Vodun spirits of the family, said to dwell on the property. Besides, the larger houses of the cities make less apparent the tendency of various generations to co-reside, while the standard two- or three-room hut in the country forces separation upon the family. The strong ties of kinship and the right of all to inheritance of the land, however, keep the relatives together. When a man's children reach adulthood, he usually divides his land informally among them; daughters are no exception. Should the plots be too large for one individual to tend, there will be mutual exchange of services and in many cases, the sister will delegate the care of her land to one of her brothers against an agreed portion of the crop. In case she is unable to secure family help, she may hire field hands or enter into an agreement with a sharecropper who, however, will not have the right of residence on the *lakou*. The same pattern of exchange of service is followed for the construction of individual houses; the granting of land by the father signifies economic independence and responsibilities, as well as the social privacy attainable only through one's being *mèt lakay-li*, master of one's own house. Unmarried daughters, if not too numerous, will continue to reside with their parents or will occupy a nearby hut with an elder relative, preferably an aunt; but often the parents, if they have no daughter, will maintain the youngest son under their roof, "to keep them company."

A *lakou* in Marbial always possesses its own graveyard, since there is no communal cemetery in the area. Each family buries its dead on its own land, and a portion of the estate thus becomes communal property and is excluded from divisions of the property among heirs. The number of modest mortar tombs can be remarkably high even when the family counts only three or four generations of continuous occupancy. This is due to the high infant mortality and the right of burial "in family grounds" granted to all degrees of kinfolk. In the past a large wooden cross and a *médicinier* tree (Curcas) were always found in the family graveyard; the cross was dedicated to Baron-Samedi, the Death god. As a result of the violent Catholic campaign of 1942 to extirpate the practice of Vodun, these were gone from Marbial in 1948.

Physically, the *lakou* or residence unit of the large family shows little planning and considerable individuality. Its social organization, however, shows more of its group character. A *lakou* always has a *mèt*, a chief who is usually the oldest member of the family, of either sex. But the power of the chief, outside considerations of personality, varies with the degree of blood relationship with the other inhabitants. Over his sons, their wives and children he has direct and effective power reinforced by the fact that he is still sole owner of the land. Yet even over that group nowadays, authority is not blindly accepted as in older times, when an angry father could destroy the birth certificate of an unruly son and thereby deprive him of his inheritance. When it comes to matters of power in his relations with nephews or cousins, the chief of the *lakou* may be just a figurehead, respected on

account of his age and no more; his wisdom may be made use of, his arbitration sought; but he himself will prudently abstain from imposing his rule outside his nuclear family. Harmony and peace are maintained less by authority than by the general effort to observe certain rules of etiquette. Huts are often only a few paces from each other and any conversation in a normal voice can be overheard by one's neighbour. To live so close requires tact and self-control. A general rule is not to "hear" what is not intended for one's ear; another is to avoid *skâdal*, loud speaking, misbehaving or quarrelling. (But some fine distinctions exist between categories of noisy acts. For instance, a husband beats his lazy and unco-operative wife; the woman is causing scandal. A wife loudly deplores her man's stinginess; the general opinion will blame the husband for disturbing the peace of the *lakou*.)

"The eyes see, the mouth stays shut," says a proverb. It describes well the required behaviour in *lakou*. How many plantains cousin Ti-Roche is cooking, how old is the mat on which he sleeps, that he does not own a spoon to eat with — such details are there to be seen by anybody who does his chores daily in the compound. But Ti-Roche will not mind as long as nobody comments on his way of life. So much for the rights of the individual. We have mentioned the exchange of services between brothers for field labour and house building; if the relations are cordial, cousins will also participate. It would be wrong to assume from such comradely dispositions that the spirit of *entraide* permeates the whole life of the *lakou* — far from it. In the economic field the spirit of competition is sharp and little pity is shown. The custom of assigning to his adult children a plot to cultivate, frees the father of the obligation to feed and clothe them. Between the age of 9 and 18 he has taught them the profession of *kiltivatè* — agriculturist; now they must make their living from it. Tilling plots nearly equal in size and quality, their chances of success are equal. He who fails will receive no help and his poverty compared with his well-to-do brothers will be no shame for the family.

Between heads of households of the same generation it is customary to exchange food which is known as "to eat together". It is a survival of the common cooking pot in the house of their parents: brothers will send to each other a pot of coffee or a small portion of their cooking daily or a few times a week. Cousins may also keep up the tradition, the frequency of which depends upon the degree of cordiality and mutual confidence existing in a *lakou*, as is shown by the following case. Some forty years ago Exantia and her brother Peter "ate together." Then Exantia's son Lipré became sick with yaws and although she dutifully isolated him from the other children, Peter, fearing contamination, refused to accept the food sent by his sister but, in an effort to re-establish normal relations, offered his food as soon as the child was cured. Exantia returned the plate and until her death never "ate with" her brother again. But it is also worth noting that no spirit of competition exists in the exchanges of food as one sends "whatever he can" without fear of criticism.

The strength of family ties never assumes its rights more strongly than in the cases of *malè*, disgraces, accident and death. Daily life in a *lakou* may be full of pettiness and bickering. An irate nephew may decapitate his aunt's goat if he finds it eating his corn; hatred, envy and rancour are subtly vented by the casual use of proverbs or indirect allusions. But few will keep their grudges when *malè* strikes, in the form of sudden illness or death. There the unity of the family must manifest itself for all outsiders to see and approve even though the day-to-day behaviour of kinfolk could justify the outsider's opinion that such sacred unity is but a myth. It is a common occurrence for a distant cousin, unable to make a living on a *lakou*, to sell his share of the land and go to Port-au-Prince. Years later, sick and destitute, he will come back among his relatives to die. He will be well received by them and will be given as decent a burial as possible. "The children of a family," an old informant said, "are like the leaves of the banana; they grow in all directions, away from the mother trunk, but they all come to die against her."

The family land, paradoxically enough, is at the same time the great element of union and disruption. Next to being childless the Marbial peasant fears nothing more than being landless. Though poor, he can always count upon the devotion of his offspring or relatives for a burial which will save his good name. His tiny parcel of land gives him the same guarantee. Illiterate, without any technical skill but his knowledge of agriculture, the average peasant fears the idea of having to uproot himself from his rural section. Even if his small plot allows him only a subsistence living he clings to it because of the security life near his relatives affords him. Hence the fierceness of land disputes in rural Haiti, aggravated by the fear of magic to get rid of opponents and the greed of the *mandataire* forain, a kind of travelling representative of city attorneys, in search of lawsuits and only too willing to foment them.

Aside from the litigations arising between two or more families because of imprecise boundaries, in a country where there has been no cadastral survey and land records are often incomplete, there exist a number of causes for lawsuits between heirs. Many peasants not only die intestate but often neglect to reveal to their offspring the exact extent of their lands and even the number of plots they own. Frequently the deceased man was not married and had children, all bearing his name, by more than one woman. If married, he might, prior to his legal union, have "recognized" other children — i.e., given himself as their "natural father" on their birth certificate, which act entitles them to a share of his possessions. These complications and many others are the source of costly and bitter lawsuits among the rural families.

When the head of a family dies leaving his widow as residuary legatee, the trouble is postponed. At her death, the heirs may adopt one of the two following courses:

- 1.—When there is agreement among them, they leave the inheritance *débout*, standing, each of them using the plot informally given him by the late head of the family.
- 2.—They can undertake the legal division of the estate, each heir thus becoming full owner of his share, with the right to sell it if he wishes.

The surveyor will parcel out the estate in such a way as to allot to each claimant a plot with similar features, i.e. including a part of flat, wooded or hilly land according to the topography. Since estates usually have a front on the *grâ chimé*, or road, the portions often will be elongated strips each with access to the so-called "highway."

The legal division is a frequent cause of disputes because the informal division, done by eye by the progenitor, may have either by error or by favouritism, assigned larger and better plots to some children. Unknown heirs might show up and assert their rights; the title to the land may prove faulty and mortgages may be revealed, imposing on all the obligation to share unexpected expenses in order to free the estate or to establish rights of possession. The expenses of the court put the peasant in debt, and to pay his debt he at times loses his land, the same land he tried so desperately to keep. A law-suit seldom leaves the family united, the losers having recourse to magic, in an effort to take revenge or reverse the court decision — and the winners to counter-magic, to make good their advantage and save their lives. Few *lakou* withstand the strain, anxiety and fear borne of such behaviour. Those dispossessed of their land or left with too small a plot will migrate. Some informants told us that even estranged kinsmen will pay a last homage to family tradition before giving up their land on a *lakou* — in order to preserve the privacy of the family, they will offer their land for sale first to a relative, and only if they fail will they seek a buyer among strangers.

In some cases, no doubt, the motive behind such extreme compliance with custom is insecurity; the departing peasant is unwilling to break the last link with his family because he may have to come back to it in a moment of distress. Furthermore, the charity shown a stricken kinsman is not always devoid of the hope of gain in the form of a last-moment legacy. But even with these reservations, above the struggle for land there survives a feeling of pride in, and respect for, the family, which takes its roots in the land and what it represents beyond its economic value.

There exists in the Créole language of the Haitian peasant the word *bitasiô*, from the French *habitation*, which in colonial times was the equivalent of plantation, but nowadays corresponds rather to estate. The *bitasiô* is called by a family name, such as Noailles, Vaudreuil or Rohan, who were great French aristocrats; others bear surnames of modest colonists or of post-colonial Haitian landowners, who tried to continue the large-scale cultivation of the French period. Marbial itself might be one of these. In spite of various land divisions through time, the *bitasiô* in the Valley of Marbial

retains its unity and personality. The peasant refers to himself as *mèt tè*, owner of the land, but he respectfully mentions also the *mèt bitasiò* whom he clearly recognizes as a power above himself, as the supernatural estate owner. Except among the Protestants who, verbally at least, discard such beliefs as nonsense, all estates have their *loa*, their Vodun deities dwelling in a *mapou* tree (Ceiba), a large rock or some odd natural feature of the property. Such *loa* are not to be confused with the family *loa* who came with the founder of the *lakou* and are inherited by his offspring. The spirit or spirits of the estate were there when the peasants came; at times it is said to be the soul of the white man or simply the stranger who owned the land. The spirit may also be the soul of the founder of the *lakou*, the *gràdèt*, the *dô*, the great-grandfather, the lord raised to the category of demigod by his descendants. Whatever the case, the spirit in one sense grants to the present-day occupants the usufruct of "his" land, in exchange for collective homage in the form of periodical Vodun "services" or ceremonies of the *mâjé* (food offering) type. On such occasions, in past generations, the head of the family officiated, though for special ceremonies a professional Vodun priest, *ougâ*, was called in. The whole family participated in such acts of grace, thanking the spirits for their protection and forewarnings (given through dreams or omens) of impending calamities which could be avoided or, at least, prepared against. The deities were no less effective in their anger when the group failed in their duties towards them; death, sickness and madness befell the family and little relief could be expected until the propitiatory steps were taken. Furthermore, all the dead buried on the estate offered help and consolation to the living.

Thus the *lakou* and its members enjoyed union, protection and security through the land. Nowadays few peasants fail to link their misery with the decline in the cult of the spirits of the land and of the family brought by the action of Catholic and Protestant clergies.

III. KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY AND RELATIONSHIPS

A. Consanguine and Affinal.

The household, made up of a single nuclear family with independent food production, constitutes the cell of the *lakou* or large family residence. For both groups, bilateral descent is the rule and for kinship, whether consanguine or affinal, French terminology is used. In the cities, the French-speaking bourgeoisie's vocabulary is richer than that of the rural masses which, to such terms as *gendre*, *bru* or *aïeul*, prefer the compound and more common nouns *beau-fils*, *belle-fille* and *grand-père*. In some cases, even, the peasant must rely upon a descriptive combination to explain a kinship relation.

Particular Haitian customs, social and religious, have created categories

of kin
most
the f

Th
form
all c
detai
Ther
mem
gene
infor
tions
of th
nep
of hi
custo
a nat
in an
are p
and
feels
terou
quote
Bil
mar

(It
the p
A
paren
term
"my
side,"
was a
found
on th
"The
to tal
pered

²Rig
1-58.

of kinship with special obligations but even for these, the terminology is mostly of European origin. Finally, in the whole of Haiti, only one surname, the father's or husband's, is used by offspring and by married women.

The average peasant shows a good knowledge of his kinsmen. One informant was able to give precise data about no less than 167 "parents" of all categories, belonging to five generations, and to add for most of them details about their private life, residence and circumstances of their deaths. There were few discrepancies between his recollections and those of other members of the same family. The explanation of such broad knowledge of genealogy is manifold; life in the *lakou* facilitates it and family history is informally taught the younger generation by the elders; reciprocal obligations among kinsfolk makes it a requisite, and one's rights to inheritance of the land is strengthened by it. An old informant said, talking of his nephew: "I do not understand why Kléber is so keen on claiming his share of his [maternal] grand-mother's land; he is only a bastard heir." In this case, custom if not law, upheld Kléber's rights, but the fact that his mother was a natural child, a most common occurrence in Haiti, was used against him in an effort to undermine his confidence. Among the bourgeoisie, individuals are prone to feign ignorance of their genealogy in order to hide illegitimacy and restrict lineage to prestige-conferring legal matings, but the peasant feels little inhibition in discussing, without malice, the consensual and adulterous unions of his family. The contemptuous reference to bastardy just quoted was unique in our period of research in Marbial.

Bilateral descent is well expressed in the following invocation to the *marasa*, the twins, at the beginning of a Vodun ceremony:

"*Marasa* on my grandmother's side, my mother's mother,

"*Marasa* on my grandfather's side, my mother's father,

Marasa on my grandmother's side, my father's mother,

Marasa on my grandfather's side, my father's father,

Marasa, Papa Marasa, who represents the four races, I ask you for a change."²

(It cannot be said whether or not the precedence given the matrilineal over the patrilineal side has any significance.)

A general term, *grâdèt*, is at times used to designate the great-grand-parents; but the Marbial peasant falls back upon a descriptive compound term for great-grandfather, the French *bisaïeul* being unknown to him, i.e. "my father's grandfather," adding, if necessary "on my father's or mother's side," while the great-grandmother is referred to as *grâgrân*. No terminology was applied to uncles and aunts at that level since the *grâdèt* stand as the founders of the family and are always spoken of with a deep respect verging on the attitude toward the supernatural. A middle-aged informant stated: "The *grâdèt* who founded the *lakou* were extraordinary men; they knew how to talk to the souls of the land and the spirits and this is why they prospered. We have no such powers and we live in misery."

²Rigaud, Odette M. "The Feasting of the Gods in Haitian Vodun," *Primitive Man*, 19, 1946, 158.

Perhaps due to the prevalence of patrilocality and the power invested in the male as head of the family, we found more emphasis in Marbial upon the grandparents on the father's than on the mother's side. A youngster is likely more often than not to grow near his father's parents, getting to know them better than those of his mother, whom he will visit occasionally. In not a few cases, even when a married man had a "garden wife" established on one of his plots away from his legal residence, his illegitimate offspring definitely insisted more on the kinship on their father's than on their mother's line. The attitude may come from two factors: a garden wife occupies a lower social status than the wife and she owns little or no land. Her children's sole hope is the inheritance of the plot belonging to the man but cultivated by the garden wife, hence the tendency to affirm kinship with the landowning parent.

When present, the grandparents exercise authority equal to the parents' over the grandchildren in matters of socialization and behaviour, and commonly children fear the sternness of their grandfather more than that of their parents. Informants aged 35 or 40 in 1948 were unanimous in recalling the role played by their grandfathers and even great-uncles in their "education." Corporal punishment by them was frequent, and after a thrashing they had to kneel and kiss the feet of the irate old men, begging forgiveness. The part of the benevolent and spoiling grandparent befell the grandmother or great-aunt, who would intervene to shorten the flogging and console the victim.

Grandchildren address their grandmother as *grân*, but use *papa* for their grandfather. The relations between siblings and parents, simply called *papa* and *mâmâ*, will be discussed later.

Avunculates, both great and immediate, are referred to and addressed as *tôtô* or *nôk*, uncle, and *tâtîn* or *tât*, aunt. In Créole, the French possessive 'mon' has become a prefix of the substantive uncle and, often, the peasant will designate such kin as *sé mônôk mwé*, "he is my [my]-uncle." *Tôtô* has a broader connotation, as we will see shortly. When, as a result of desertion, separation or death, the father is absent, the maternal uncle occupies a pre-eminent place in the bringing up of his nephews, a usage which might be explained historically. The instability and rarity of formal unions during the colonial period gave to the maternal uncle much of the role of father. From independence to the present time, adulterous unions, whether entered upon for economic or sexual motives, have been less permanent than formal concubines and legal unions and, there again, the maternal uncle is invested with the authority and duties of the father. It is natural for a rejected concubine to return to her family, but even a widow is inclined to leave the *lakou* of her husband's family and resume life among her consanguine kin. To alleviate the charge thrust upon her parents, she will, not infrequently, entrust a son to her brother or a daughter to her sister.

Outside of their precise kinship meaning, the term *tôtô* and, to a lesser degree *tâtîn*, is freely applied by young folks to: 1) older cousins regardless

of the degree; 2) intimate friends of the family; and 3) any old individual. All three uses denote the respect youngsters ought to show for age.

Siblings address each other by their first name and refer to each other as *frè* and *sè*, brother, sister. Among older generations the tendency is to use the vocative *sò*, sister, plus first name, a reverential term nephews also employ when referring to their elderly aunts. In a fashion parallel to the use of *tôtô* just quoted, *sò* and *frè* plus first name, are freely ascribed by adults to close friends of the same generation; another term, *sésé*, sister, without first name, has fallen into disuse.

The terminology for cousins is French with three degrees being recognized: *kouzè jèmè* (male), *kouzèn jèmè* (female), blood cousins, and *kouzè sou-jèmè* (often for both sexes), second degree ones. Beyond these, cousinship is referred to as *kouzè lwè*, distant cousins or simply *fami*, of the family. Where no friendship exists cousins greet each other as *kouzè*; otherwise the first name is used. Cousins of both sexes are ideal playmates in Marbial where children are not encouraged to form gangs and roam the countryside, a behaviour qualified as vagrancy; the family *lakou* is considered a large enough playground and one where unaware youngsters are protected against magic attempts of strangers to steal their souls and to poison them. Male cousins have more opportunities than their female counterparts to become intimate friends since the duties entrusted to them facilitate contacts. Boys between 8 and 12 years of age help in farming, carry food to their fathers at work in the field, take care of the cattle and run errands; girls of the same age, when not put in charge of their younger brothers and sisters (a job which leaves little freedom of movement), accompany their mothers to market. The importance of close ties between cousins is illustrated by two somewhat similar cases. In one *lakou* two first cousins were not on speaking terms and did not exchange food as a result of a boundary dispute. In another, an uncle and his nephew, a father of one boy, were estranged on account of an accusation of magic levelled by the nephew. In both cases the children were allowed to play together because "it was not necessary for children to be mixed in the affairs of grown ups."

Friendly relations between cousins constitute an economic asset, at times as valuable as those between siblings or between uncles and nephews; practical advantages and favours are expected of them, loans of money for one. Fragmentation of property is constantly reducing the percentage of peasants who can live by farming their plots, and slowly producing a concentration of land in the hands of a few fortunate and hard-working families. The small proprietors, in order to increase their income, must negotiate sharecropping deals with neighbours who own more land than they can till alone. This is the *démwatié* or half-and-half system. Another recourse is the *gadinay*, whereby a peasant takes care of a chicken, a pig or a goat and shares the brood or litter with the owner. Finally, in serious emergency the poor Marbial peasant will give, for a couple of dollars, a *potèk* or "mortgage" for a

set number of crops on a "garden", meaning, at times, a fraction as little as 20 or 30 square yards of his land. Playing on kinship and the prospect of reciprocity, the needy hope for a favourable or fair arrangement from a relative whereby the stranger, free of such considerations, is bound to be harsh or indifferent. However, stinginess, the sense of business and shrewdness do not blindly surrender to kinship duties. We witnessed a woman bread seller who denied her poor uncle credit for three cents because he could not specify when he would pay. A well-off peasant rejected the plea of a first cousin for a sharecropping agreement and favoured a "stranger" who promised to plant beans and corn, more profitable crops, instead of sweet potatoes and millet; the purchase of the bean seed was, at the moment, beyond the cousin's means.

Affinal terminology shows no originality, compound French terms being used for all in-laws. For affinal uncles and aunts, the referential form is *nòk* and *tât pa alias*, by alliance, but the differentiation is absent in the vocative. A man usually addresses his father-in-law as *bopè*, out of deference, but, due to the prestige and strict etiquette related to the title of wife, he might both designate and address his mother-in-law as Mrs. So-and-so (her husband's first name) adding, if referring to her, "my mother-in-law." Siblings-in-law are called by their first name except when the married status grants a sister-in-law the distinction just mentioned. Ego refers to the mates of his siblings as *bofrè* and *bèlè*, but adds "by alliance" for the spouses of his wife's brothers and sisters "because he does not consider them as having entered his family."

When acquaintance or friendship does not antedate marriage a man's relations with his parents-in-law tend to keep a strain of formality, the reasons for which will be clearer after a description of the requirements for marriage and the trials of the engagement period. The daughter-in-law, having come to live in her mate's *lakou*, faces a difficult situation, to be discussed below.

B. Social and Ritual Kinship.

Social and ritual kinship institutions are losing their importance in Haiti, faster in the cities than in the rural areas; but even among the peasantry of Marbial some customs are now devoid of significance and attitudes towards others are fast changing.

Adoption, if tolerated, was never formally acknowledged by Haitian law. Old Marbial people did mention a few cases of "adoption". In two cases godsons had been brought to live in the homes of their godfathers since early youth, had adopted their surnames and had been included as heirs to their properties on equal footings with the legal children. In a third case, the son of a deceased second cousin had received identical treatment. In the mind of the informants, "adoption" consisted not so much in the change of name as in the inheritance of a parcel of land, a provision the adoptive fathers had confirmed in their wills and which the blood heirs had accepted

either on account of the close bonds grown between them and their adoptive siblings, or out of respect for the departed heads of families.

The ties of *Milchverwandschaft* said to have been so strong in the past as to make marriage improbable between *sè* and *frè lèt*, sister and foster-brother, are nowadays little more than a basis for casual friendship between the artificial siblings and for affection between the mother and the milk-child. A number of other customs reveal the same loss of importance, for instance the *frè batèm*, baptism brothers, when two children share one or both godparents, and communion brothers, when they receive the host for the first time together. Such occurrences neither create friendship nor impose mutual obligations as before, but they might fortify preexisting ties.

The *compadrazgo*, for which no substantive exists in Créole, overshadows all other artificial kinship institutions and influences educational, economic and social attitudes, reaching even the supernatural beliefs. The one other custom comparable to it, but more restricted in scope, is the cult of the *marasa* or twins, based on real or fictitious consanguinity, and creating a whole set of special relationships between the living or dead twins and the remainder of the family. There is a variety of *compadrazgos*, the two main ones springing from baptism and religious wedding; besides these we find *compadrazgo* relationships created on a number of occasions such as the blessing of a house, the baptism of Vodun drums, the Vodun godparents of the twins and, according to one informant, the harvest of yams. Baptism *compadrazgo* may be noted first.

In the Haitian scale of values, mother and baptism godmother stand on an equal footing as objects of abuse — the grossest insults of the Créole vocabulary are directed indifferently at the opponent's mother or godmother. This attitude was already established during the colonial period, when we also find the tendency to choose godparents among individuals whose position on the plantation or the household of the master enabled them to foster the rise of the child in the social structure and give him some security. *Compadrazgo* is one more positive element in the struggle for survival the peasant wages against heavy odds: ignorance, which makes him an easy prey to unscrupulous officials, usurers and their like; diseases which bring sudden death and the ruinous funeral expenses; flood, drought and erosion which thwart his efforts to live off the land. Kinship offers much protection against the hostile forces, but not enough; the peasant sums up the situation saying: "When you choose godparents you must do so with a view to extend the family." He will look for them where his kinsmen are absent or too insignificant to be of help, and he will try to ally himself with rich peasants and city-dwellers of some influence; the higher his own status in the community the better his chances to give his child a prestigious couple of godparents from whom attention, favours and help are expected — in spite of the fact that the peasant has little to offer in exchange except occasional gifts of fowls and agricultural products such as fruits or coffee. The average peasant

set number of crops on a "garden", meaning, at times, a fraction as little as 20 or 30 square yards of his land. Playing on kinship and the prospect of reciprocity, the needy hope for a favourable or fair arrangement from a relative whereby the stranger, free of such considerations, is bound to be harsh or indifferent. However, stinginess, the sense of business and shrewdness do not blindly surrender to kinship duties. We witnessed a woman bread seller who denied her poor uncle credit for three cents because he could not specify when he would pay. A well-off peasant rejected the plea of a first cousin for a sharecropping agreement and favoured a "stranger" who promised to plant beans and corn, more profitable crops, instead of sweet potatoes and millet; the purchase of the bean seed was, at the moment, beyond the cousin's means.

Affinal terminology shows no originality, compound French terms being used for all in-laws. For affinal uncles and aunts, the referential form is *nòk* and *tât pa alias*, by alliance, but the differentiation is absent in the vocative. A man usually addresses his father-in-law as *bopè*, out of deference, but, due to the prestige and strict etiquette related to the title of wife, he might both designate and address his mother-in-law as Mrs. So-and-so (her husband's first name) adding, if referring to her, "my mother-in-law." Siblings-in-law are called by their first name except when the married status grants a sister-in-law the distinction just mentioned. Ego refers to the mates of his siblings as *bofrè* and *bèlsè*, but adds "by alliance" for the spouses of his wife's brothers and sisters "because he does not consider them as having entered *his* family."

When acquaintance or friendship does not antedate marriage a man's relations with his parents-in-law tend to keep a strain of formality, the reasons for which will be clearer after a description of the requirements for marriage and the trials of the engagement period. The daughter-in-law, having come to live in her mate's *lakou*, faces a difficult situation, to be discussed below.

B. Social and Ritual Kinship.

Social and ritual kinship institutions are losing their importance in Haiti, faster in the cities than in the rural areas; but even among the peasantry of Marbial some customs are now devoid of significance and attitudes towards others are fast changing.

Adoption, if tolerated, was never formally acknowledged by Haitian law. Old Marbial people did mention a few cases of "adoption". In two cases godsons had been brought to live in the homes of their godfathers since early youth, had adopted their surnames and had been included as heirs to their properties on equal footings with the legal children. In a third case, the son of a deceased second cousin had received identical treatment. In the mind of the informants, "adoption" consisted not so much in the change of name as in the inheritance of a parcel of land, a provision the adoptive fathers had confirmed in their wills and which the blood heirs had accepted

either on account of the close bonds grown between them and their adoptive siblings, or out of respect for the departed heads of families.

The ties of *Milchverwandschaft* said to have been so strong in the past as to make marriage improbable between *sè* and *frè lèt*, sister and foster-brother, are nowadays little more than a basis for casual friendship between the artificial siblings and for affection between the mother and the milk-child. A number of other customs reveal the same loss of importance, for instance the *frè batèm*, baptism brothers, when two children share one or both godparents, and communion brothers, when they receive the host for the first time together. Such occurrences neither create friendship nor impose mutual obligations as before, but they might fortify preexisting ties.

The *compadrazgo*, for which no substantive exists in Créole, overshadows all other artificial kinship institutions and influences educational, economic and social attitudes, reaching even the supernatural beliefs. The one other custom comparable to it, but more restricted in scope, is the cult of the *marasa* or twins, based on real or fictitious consanguinity, and creating a whole set of special relationships between the living or dead twins and the remainder of the family. There is a variety of *compadrazgos*, the two main ones springing from baptism and religious wedding; besides these we find *compadrazgo* relationships created on a number of occasions such as the blessing of a house, the baptism of Vodun drums, the Vodun godparents of the twins and, according to one informant, the harvest of yams. Baptism *compadrazgo* may be noted first.

In the Haitian scale of values, mother and baptism godmother stand on an equal footing as objects of abuse — the grossest insults of the Créole vocabulary are directed indifferently at the opponent's mother or godmother. This attitude was already established during the colonial period, when we also find the tendency to choose godparents among individuals whose position on the plantation or the household of the master enabled them to foster the rise of the child in the social structure and give him some security. *Compadrazgo* is one more positive element in the struggle for survival the peasant wages against heavy odds: ignorance, which makes him an easy prey to unscrupulous officials, usurers and their like; diseases which bring sudden death and the ruinous funeral expenses; flood, drought and erosion which thwart his efforts to live off the land. Kinship offers much protection against the hostile forces, but not enough; the peasant sums up the situation saying: "When you choose godparents you must do so with a view to extend the family." He will look for them where his kinsmen are absent or too insignificant to be of help, and he will try to ally himself with rich peasants and city-dwellers of some influence; the higher his own status in the community the better his chances to give his child a prestigious couple of godparents from whom attention, favours and help are expected — in spite of the fact that the peasant has little to offer in exchange except occasional gifts of fowls and agricultural products such as fruits or coffee. The average peasant

of Marbial aims at establishing *compadrazgo* ties with minor officials, land-surveyors, mechanics and seamstresses of the town of Jacmel; the well-to-do one will aim higher or will count on his own importance as a coffee producer to tie to his interests the "speculator", the middleman who buys his crop and sells it to the powerful coffee *exportateur*. The speculator and the town-lawyer, who often double as usurers, are the adversaries of the peasantry. They are those who lend the peasantry money at 50 per cent interest, requiring titles of property as a guarantee and using blackmail or threats to acquire titles. Should they become *kòpè* (ritual co-fathers, *compadres*), some humanity might be expected of them. Needless to say, many Marbial folk chose godparents among their own class, out of friendship and gratitude or at the request of an acquaintance. A custom which is in decline consisted in choosing the godparents of the first child among relatives, preferably the greatparents or the avunculate. The godparents are chosen before the child is born.

Whatever the motives of the choice or the social position of the godparents, their obligations are well defined. First, they are the spiritual parents of the child, a precept of the Catholic Church long accepted by the peasantry. As such in Marbial they are not to marry their godchildren and these cannot marry the offspring of their *parèn* and *marèn*, godfather and godmother. Often the father asks the godfather to choose the name for the child, thus giving a chance to flippant city-dwellers to suggest humorous French words the unknowing peasant will gratefully accept. In some regions of Haiti it is still the custom for the godfather to hold the baptismal certificate and to produce it only when required for the first communion and wedding ceremonies. The godfather pays the priest and presents a gift to the parents for the child; money is currently accepted. Prior to the ceremony he must also call on his *komè*, the godmother, and bring her a small present. The godmother, by tradition, takes charge of the baptismal gown and if present when the godchild dies, she must also provide the funeral clothes.

In Marbial, *fiyèl* (from the French *filleul*, used in Créole for godchildren of both sexes) used to visit their godparents formally around Christmas time, possibly because of the Vodun ceremony of bathing children in order to protect them against evil powers. Another visit took place on January first, to wish them *larézoné*, a corruption of the French *l'heureuse année*, and to receive their *zètèn*, the *étrennes*, gift of money, clothes, sweets, fowl or agricultural products. It is not uncommon for godchildren to spend a day or more in the home of their godparents and even to reside with them for long periods in order "to be educated" and to help them in their work. Co-residence is most appreciated and profitable when the godparent lives in town, because the child will "evolve" in the urban milieu learning, it is hoped, good manners. The importance of the godparents for the child is finally illustrated in the belief that in this world children serve and help their parents,

but in the other one, after their death, they remain forever at the side of the godparent of their own sex, the boys with their *parèn*, the girls with their *marèn*. Godparents do not wear mourning for their godchildren, but godchildren do "take mourning" for their godparents, and in some regions during a period as long as the one prescribed for parents.

Following the baptism in church, a party is offered by the parents where soft drinks, cakes and candies are served. This is the occasion to observe the relationship which must prevail between godparents and parents. Both couples use, addressing each other, the expressions *môkôpè* and *makomè*, "my *compadre*" and "my *comadre*," exclusive of all other terms prescribed by etiquette, age or social status — for the ties of *compadrazgo* must override the formalism so often present in interpersonal relations. The attitude adopted by two *compadres* of opposite sex takes on the aspect of a compulsory joking relationship; the man will praise in words reserved for flirtations the beauty, youth and elegance of his *komè*, and she will answer in the same vein, even in front of her husband, a behaviour unthinkable under ordinary circumstances. It seems that the joy and gaiety present at the baptism party ought to remain forever in the mind of the godparents, enlivening all future contacts. Between male *compadres* a somewhat similar pattern prevails: where differences in social status exist, a great effort is made to eliminate them by means of jocular talk, drinking and frequent use of the vocative *mô kôpè*.

Wedding *compadrazgo* entails less duties than baptism *compadrazgo*, but reveals the same effort to associate oneself with non-blood kinsmen. The most important part of a wedding in Marbial, as will be seen later, is the party given after the church ceremony, and nothing enhances more the prestige of a marriage than its sponsorship by *moun lavil*, city-dwellers. *Parèn* and *marè nòs*, godfather and godmother of marriages, observe in their relationship the same joking pattern just described for the baptism godparents. Due to the absence of the permanent link assured by a godchild, contacts are usually less frequent between wedding *compadres* than between baptism ones, but occasional favours are expected. However the special role of the godparents is, when need be, to arbitrate disputes between spouses and to reconcile them. When addressing their sponsors a married couple employ exclusively the *kôpè* and *komè* titles and so do the sponsors for each other.

For the blessing of a house, the owner chooses four or six pairs of godparents, a couple for each corner pole, depending on the size of the house. The selection takes place among friends, relatives of any degree, and strangers. Beside flowers, each *marèn* brings a tray of pastry, soft drinks, cigarettes and one coloured handkerchief and will receive from her *kôpè* a small sum of money equivalent to the cost of the goods; the trays are set in the house and their contents served to the guests. The blessing proper is done by a Catholic priest who charges a fee of one dollar, or by a *pè savàn*, bush priest, a layman who can read Latin, sing hymns and recite prayers; he charges only

20 or 40 cents. Once the ceremony is over no obligations are imposed on the sponsors. The yam *compadrazgo* was mentioned by one informant who referred to the trait as existing in the central region of Haiti, but knew little more about it. Rituals related to the yam harvest are described both by Price-Mars³ and Herskovits⁴ who interpret them as a survival of the West African offering of the first fruits to the spirits; however neither mentions "godparents of the yam." Yet according to our informant, a man and a woman are chosen among friends to be godparents, but are bound to no further obligations, once the harvest and offering of the first fruits to the souls of the departed and the twins are performed.

Ritual kinship rooted in Vodun is not well known. If we possess sufficient data about the cult of the twins and the baptism of drums, we are less fortunate concerning the relationship between members of Vodun societies. We find ourselves even more in the dark about the attitudes prevailing among believers initiated together at ceremonies, such as the *kâzo*, with strong similarities to the rites de passage practised in some West African societies. Candidates to *kâzo* live together in seclusion, are dressed in white and suffer the ordeal of fire. Puberty is not marked by initiation in Haiti, thus the youths are deprived of an occasion to share trials and knowledge which could bind them together; possibly the concepts of the rites de passage have been transferred to certain Vodun rites, an hypothesis which makes the topic of Vodun kinship all the more worth investigating.

Vodun drums are considered as living beings with a soul, and as such their consecration or baptism requires godparents who offer rum, soft drinks, perfume and clothing. The sponsorship entails no further obligations.

Twins, called *jumeaux* in Northern Haiti⁵ and *marasa* in the rest of the country, are endowed with supernatural powers ranging from rainmaking to casting sickness and bad luck on people who slight them. A family which has twins, dead or alive, among its members, is bound to offer them every year or at more distant intervals a *mâje*, a ritual meal. In some cases, even fictitious consanguinity is enough to establish the cult: an informant related how his family, alarmed at repeated misfortunes, consulted a *kaplata*, soothsayer, who "saw" many, many generations back twins whose existence was unknown to their descendants; the resulting failure to honour them was the cause of a chain of calamities. A ritual meal was organized, added the informant, and his family enjoyed peace.

Herskovits⁶ and Price-Mars⁷ describe various aspects of the cult of the *marasa* and propose explanations of its origins, but they do not report the existence of godparents of the twins, a trait mentioned by Rigaud but in a way that is incomplete compared with the data collected in Marbial. Rigaud

³Price-Mars, Jean. *Ainsi Parla l'Oncle, Essais d'Ethnographie*. Compiegne, 1928.

⁴Herskovits, Melville J. *Life in a Haitian Valley*. Knopf, New York, 1937.

⁵Price-Mars, Jean. "Le Culte des Marasas," *Afroamérica*, Vol. 1, 1945, pp. 41-49.

⁶Herskovits, *op. cit.*, p. 201 ff.

⁷Price-Mars, *op. cit.*, 1945.

says, describing the baptism of the ritual plates used for the twins, that "children are promoted to the title of godfathers and godmothers, and they will hold most seriously the ritually lighted candle."⁸ From a Marbial informant we have the following statement:

In order to treat *marasa* well, at their birth two calabashes of equal size are sawed in half to form 4 small *kwi*; one may be put to common use or thrown away and 3 are kept, one for each twin and the last one for the *dosou* (male) or *dosa* (female) child [following the twins] to be born. The plates are baptized with holy water while the formula "Today, I baptize you, for you are not a horse" is said. One year after their birth, the twins themselves are baptized at home; a godfather and a godmother are required, but if the *dosou* or *dosa* is born, there will be two couples of godparents chosen among friends of the family. The father [of the twins] chooses the godmothers and his wife the godfathers. The *kwi* are filled with candies, cake and *akasa* (sweetened groundcorn) which the twins and the *dosou* eat; what they leave is for the godparents and the family. The ceremony over, the godparents deposit in each plate, a small sum of money in coins so that they may win their godchildren's benevolence.

Because the twins and their "servant" the *dosou* are endowed with supernatural powers, it is the godparents who expect to gain from the ritual kinship. It must be noted that this is contrary to the usual relationship which exists between godparents and godchildren.

Denis⁹ lists godparents among the participants to the "Vodun fire baptism", but is silent about their obligations to the child.

A strong esprit-de-corps grows between members of some Vodun societies and the ties so established result in actions similar to those motivated by kinship. Rigaud reminds us that "every *humfort* is supported by a society with a name . . . A *humfort* society is like a large family whose members help one another in joy and sorrow."¹⁰

Of a different nature are the bonds uniting members of the agrarian "societies". These serve the primary purpose of performing, on a rotation basis, the sowing, weeding and harvesting of each member's fields; but they also extend their activities to funerals, "carnaval" and parties. In 1948, however, such societies were in sharp decline in Marbial not only as a result of poor economic conditions, but also on account of the hostility of the Catholic clergy, which had banned the use of drums because of their association with Vodun and, said an informant, "the drums were the soul of the societies." There are lesser social ties which may be considered as adjuncts to friendship. People bearing the same first name, but otherwise unrelated, call each other *tokai* and if already on good terms will tease each other upon meeting. In 1935, in the village of Kenscoff, we remember two peasants calling each other *batimá*, "ship", meaning they were close friends, an unexpected survival of the colonial friendship tie grown between slaves who had crossed the Atlantic aboard the same ship.¹¹

⁸Rigaud, Odette M. "Etude sur le Culte des Marassas en Haiti," *Zaire*, Vol. 6, 1952, pp. 597-621.

⁹Denis, Lorimer. "Baptême de Feu dans le Culte Vodouesque," *Bulletin du Bureau d'Ethnologie d'Haïti*, ser. II, Vol 2, 1947, pp. 1-4.

¹⁰Rigaud, Odette M., *op. cit.*, 1946, p. 10.

¹¹Cabon, Adolphe. *Histoire d'Haïti*, 4 vols. Port-au-Prince, n.d.

Beyond his family, the peasant of Marbial feels that he belongs to the community built around the administrative and religious institutions, the chief of the rural police, the parish priest, the heads of the various Protestant denominations and the *ouga*. To all of them he goes for personal advice and help, according to their attributes. The market, the ideal place for the exchange of news and gossip, puts him in contact with outsiders, yet provides him with a disposition to build up a certain ethnocentrism, for the Marbial peasant has definite prejudiced opinions about the inhabitants of the neighbouring rural sections. Those from Cap-Rouge are "landgrabbers," always on the look-out for a wealthy heiress; the peasants of the upper Gosseline Valley are *moun moun*, "mountain people," a derogatory expression; the people from Lafond, in the plain of Jacmel, he calls *agra*, a term which carries the meaning of patronizing attitudes rooted in a feeling of superiority. Lafond is nearer Jacmel, the focus town of the Marbial area, and its inhabitants consequently have closer contacts than those of Marbial with the city-dwellers, hence the slightly invidious opinion of the Marbial folk.

IV. MATING, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

A. Limitations and Prohibitions

While sailing in September 1942 along the Northwest Coast of Haiti at a spot below Môle St. Nicholas, a mariner pointed at the white cliffs of Cheval Blanc, and declared that the inhabitants of a fishing village there were so isolated that it was common practice among them to enter into consensual unions with their first cousins. As a result, he added, there was found among the inhabitants a large number of hunchbacks, of people with six toes or fingers, and *fou*, crazy ones. In *Jérémie*, a town in Southwestern Haiti, the eccentric behaviour of the intellectual youth was popularly explained along similar lines: due to isolation and social prejudice, the mulatto élite of the town, it was said, intermarried so frequently that mental unbalance resulted from the mating of cousins. Let us note that, for both cases, no research has tested such affirmations.

Generally speaking, the limitations and prohibitions to marriage between blood kin prescribed by the Civil Code and Canon Law are accepted by the population. The records of the Catholic parish of Marbial registers, between 1930 and 1948, only three unions between parties normally barred from marriage. One case was between uncle and niece, and presidential authorization, prior to the religious ceremony, lifted the ban imposed by the Civil Code; the other two were between second-degree cousins and required the permission of the Archbishop of Port-au-Prince, granted against an alm of one dollar and a penance consisting of a *pater* and *ave* said daily for ten days. The rareness of such unions, then, is not explicable in terms of the sternness of the Church but rather because of unfavourable community attitudes —

rooted, possibly, in the fear of abnormal offspring. Incest is an even rarer occurrence, one case being reported in 1948 in Marbial — a widower who was known to have had intercourse with his daughter, his only surviving child aged about 16, who had taken refuge with a maternal aunt. Since the man was considered crazy, the incident was narrated with only slight reprobation. While unions between ritual kin such as godparents and godchildren are unknown, the tabu against marriage of baptismal brothers and sisters is losing strength, particularly in the city. Equally, while interreligious couples are becoming more common among urban dwellers, in Marbial in 1948, three factors inhibited a Catholic from marrying a Protestant: 1) the control exercised by the parish priest was still strong; 2) due to socio-religious pressure, the Protestant minority had built up an in-group solidarity which led to in-group marriages; and 3) at an early date the Protestant missions mixed their religious activity with material help and technical advice and required of their believers a strict life free of Vodun practices; the regimen resulted in a higher economic level among the converts. Since equality of economic status was becoming more and more a decisive element in marriages, the well-to-do Protestant, unlikely to marry his Catholic social equal because of socio-religious obstacles, had to seek a mate among his co-religionists. When asked the academic question whether one should renounce his faith for the sake of love, informants replied that it was more probable that women would do so than men.

Vodun deities, at times, also oppose a union. Whether the "head" *loa* of the parties are consulted through an *ougd* or have expressed themselves by means of dreams or omens, frequently a couple must face the fact that their respective Vodun deities do not approve their prospective union. Informants agreed that a grudging consent is obtained from the gods by a simple offering of food, or even the mere promise of such an offering.

There exists in Vodun the practice of a believers entering into a mystical marriage with a deity of the opposite sex, the most publicized of such unions being that of a male with the love goddess Erzili-Freda-Dahome. Gossip and folklore report cases of eligible bachelors forced to celibacy by the over-jealous Erzili. But some informants report that in case of a mystical marriage antedating the social one, a man will make a compromise by which he abstains from sexual intercourse with his human wife on Tuesdays and Thursdays these days then being consecrated to his divine mate.

Deviant behaviour may cause serious limitation or prohibition to union in Marbial. There are three main offences against the value pattern of the community and they affect the female more than the male. To be accused of being a *wagatèz* or witch, justly or not, will bar a woman from a good union and force her to migrate, or to enter into an unfavourable mating arrangement. The magical activities most damaging to one's reputation are of the types linked with love and sex, such as charms to make a man impotent, to make childbirth difficult for his wife or concubine or, going one step further, to provoke the death of his children. Given the extraordinary powers attri-

buted to magic in Haiti, such accusations are quite frequent and at times, may be employed to break up either an engagement or a consensual union. Magical activities are supposedly employed most by mature females, either in an effort to get rid of a rival, or to make more secure their hold on a man.

Loose sexual behaviour on the part of a girl classifies her as a *jènès* (i.e. a "youth", here meaning "whore") and destroys all her prospects of a decent marriage. A clear distinction is established between the girl who loses her virginity or even bears a child, but conforms afterwards to the pattern of "seriousness" expected of her sex and age, and the one who defiantly "grins and makes advances to males," going to the extreme of having intercourse with them. Informants unanimously indicated that such *jènès* either become professional whores, *bouzè* (there were only two in Marbial in 1948) or leave the valley to try their luck elsewhere. In five cases of home desertion by girls recorded among five families, it was clear from the data gathered that three were due to excessive corporal punishment applied in an effort to correct *jènès* behaviour by the fathers; one case remained unspecified and the last one was an elopement with a suitor rejected by the family. Paternal authority as a limiting factor will be discussed later.

Since the Marbial male enjoys more status than the female, he is less affected both by the use of magic and by excessive sexually oriented behaviour. Magic, when used by a man in matters of love, is considered "self defence." When directed against his enemies it provokes reprobation, — but a reprobation mixed with fear — and, more often than not, it is the victim or his descendants who will migrate if they feel powerless to retaliate. The power and relative wealth of not a few influential peasants were publicly attributed to magic and yet such peasants suffered no social discrimination. Even less reprehensible is any display of interest in women. The successful "woman's man" is enviously and approvingly called *gasò*, manly; *bò kòk*, a good rooster; or *cho*, hot. But even a superficial examination of the condition of life in Marbial will reveal that the opportunities offered a Don Juan are limited. Adultery is far from being common, since no such acts can long remain secret, and the inevitable result is either separation or a sound and public thrashing of the unfaithful woman by her offended mate. We will see that married life increasingly imposes limitations on the sexual activity and extra-marital relations of the male.

B. Engagement and Marriage.

Few if any processes of life in Marbial are saturated with more formalism than engagement and marriage. If the male upon reaching puberty is granted a certain liberty of movement, the girl from the time of her first menses is expected to observe a strict code of behaviour aimed at protecting her reputation, thus ensuring her chances for a decent marriage or a formal common-law union, according to her family status. Other than being a hard worker, no virtue is more sought after in a prospective wife than that of "seriousness." A serious girl must always remember that all men are potential enemies and

tha
bel
tive
oco
her
as
bei
ma
his
is a
a y
tion
but
vol
unt
gro
for
I
par
gua
fam
and
tion
mon
fusa
tim
or
dec
wor
are
suit
pro
far
a so
case
mar
rule
tens
larg
econ
O
offe
war
vari
12)

that the community has a thousand eyes and a quick tongue. The comparative behaviour of an "established" woman and a marriageable girl is most instructive in this respect: whereas the married or *plâsé* female is allowed an occasional joke and friendly conversation with a male, a young lady, even in her twenties, will restrict such contacts to an exchange of greetings so formal as to verge on apparent hostility. The occasions for a private *tête-à-tête* being few, two young people in love will exchange furtive glances at the market, on the road, at a wake, baptism or marriage; the male might express his passion in flowery terms, but expects only a mild rebuff as a sign that he is acceptable. At times the couple resorts to the language of flowers, using a young relative as a go-between.¹² The participants to such permissible flirtation become known as *ménaj* (literally "household, married couple" in French, but meaning instead a "steady flirtation" in Créole), a condition which provokes interest mainly among the teenagers, the parents feigning to ignore it until formally brought to their attention by the "presentation visit" of the groom-to-be, and later by the "letter of demand," the ceremonial request formulated by the groom's family.

Parental authority may put an end to the affair after the visit if one of the parties considers the other as unsuitable. Even the sending of the letter is no guarantee that the now public engagement will have a happy ending. A family council is called to discuss the proposal, after gathering, if necessary, and with the utmost discretion, data upon the behaviour and economic situation of the suitor. Since a quick answer to the letter is considered improper, months may elapse before the *fidésé* is notified by a letter of acceptance; refusal is summarily expressed by sending back the letter of demand. In older times, the girl's father, after giving his opinion to the family council, accepted or rejected the demand and few daughters were bold enough to discuss the decision. Nowadays, with the increasing economic independence of the woman, a daughter, upon reaching her full majority at 25 (and if her savings are important enough) will marry against her father's will or will refuse a suitor agreeable to him. A girl we knew sternly resisted her family's approval of her suitor (whom she loved), on the sole ground that he lived too far away from her *lakou*. Curiously enough, in regard to matters of mating a son is as vulnerable to paternal opposition as a daughter; in fact, the rare cases available for analysis indicate greater dependency on his part. Once married, the son must usually raise his family on the *lakou* where his father rules, and marriage against his better judgment could be a source of endless tension. The daughter follows her husband to his *lakou*, thus escaping in large measure her father's vindictiveness; besides, she is less vulnerable economically and can wait for a reconciliation made easier by her absence.

Once accepted, the suitor is allowed to visit his *fidésé* at her home, and will offer to help his future in-laws in the field to confirm his good attitudes towards work and his spirit of co-operation. The duration of the engagement varies with the economic means of the couple; the groom must "break ground"

¹²Bastien, Rémy. *La Familia Rural Haitiana*. Libra, Mexico City, Mexico, 1951, pp. 68-69.

and starts, if need be, the construction of his house with the help of his relatives; he must purchase — usually on credit — the standard furniture, a mahogany bed, a table, a few chairs, a rack for water jugs, table and kitchen ware at a minimum cost (in 1948) of \$100.00. He must provide the *alids*, wedding rings, and hand one, before the wedding to his bride-to-be. If the girl owns a ring from a previous engagement, her suitor will buy it at a symbolic price in compliance with the belief that to be given a ring is a bad omen. The *fiásé* prepares her trousseau and wedding gown, plus the bed-linens. Seldom do the preparations last less than a year or more than two. Many cases were reported of the girl helping her *fiásé* with her own money in order to advance the date of the ceremony. No criticism of this was voiced by young informants, but the older males interrogated on the subject considered it as damaging to marital authority.

The one important incident liable to happen during the engagement is the breaking up of the engagement itself. One case we incline to consider atypical was motivated by a bit of information not available at the time the letter of demand was favourably answered. Under pressure from his father a man aged 26 broke his engagement because it became known that a sister of his future bride had been unfaithful to her lover in Jacmel thus causing a "public scandal." The father's haughty comment to his son depicts class consciousness among the Marbial peasantry: "Your choice is not worthy of my race [family]." Misbehaviour, bad manners, too much inquisitiveness on the part of the fiancé about the dowry (i.e. amount of land) are grounds for a rupture.

Available data indicate that sexual intercourse during the engagement is not the rule in Marbial, in spite of the fact that a woman in her twenties and doing business could easily meet her *fiásé* at some distant market or take advantage of a visit to her future in-laws' *lakou*. A reliable informant referring to five married couples all belonging to "good families," was positive that only one of the wives was not a virgin at the time of the religious wedding. Premarital pregnancies are rare. Occasional intercourse during the engagement and possible subsequent pregnancy, while frowned upon, is excused by the sentence "they were a bit in a hurry." Similarly among couples "engaged to be married", non-virginity is accepted only if the "accident" took place during early puberty with someone of good social standing, or resulted from "a profound love", the Marbial euphemism for intercourse between *fiásé*. We incline to believe that in Marbial, chastity is associated with social status. Between 1930, when the Catholic parish of Marbial and neighbouring rural sections were created, and 1941, the average number of marriages per year was 15.08 with a minimum of 6 in 1930 and a maximum of 27 in 1940; the minimum Catholic population for the period was estimated at 18,000.

Twenty-seven per cent of the 15.08 yearly average number of weddings were between people aged 41 and above who chose to regularize their common-law unions in the Church and hence claim a higher status in the community. The inference is that marriage as the first form of union was an

upper rural class practice until 1941 and took place mainly among a minority enjoying relative economic ease and discouraging premarital sexual experience.

To the cost of a wedding, already prohibitive, we must add an amount of cash varying between 15 and 40 dollars which the groom must give to his father-in-law to prepare the wedding party, and to pay such minor expenses as judge and church fees. When a husband-to-be purchases the furniture, he normally does so on credit. The wedding party, a ceremonial essential, was the chief obstacle to a higher incidence of marriage until the early forties. In fact, the lavishness of the party counted more than the religious ceremony itself in granting prestige.

We believe that the exclusiveness of marriage as just described was related to: 1) the relative economic prosperity linked with the flourishing period of the community centre of Jacmel whose slow decline began around 1900, became acute in the thirties, and reached its nadir during the second World War; and 2) the rigid bourgeois behaviour prevailing in the same town which set the pattern for the upper-class peasant minority of Marbial through business and social relations. Jacmel enjoyed a brief recovery during the five years following 1945, but the economic lift did not bring back the traditional exclusiveness of marriage in Marbial. Under pressure from the Catholic priest and stimulated perhaps by Protestant behaviour, the younger generation broke with the past. Excluding the month of February 1943 during which, at the height of the Anti-superstition campaign, 151 weddings were blessed, we have, between 1942 and 1945, a total of 297 marriages as against 181 for the period 1930-1941; true enough, the figure also includes more "late unions" than during the earlier period, but still the increase is striking. The Marbial peasant aged 26-35 had decided that the legal status of marriage was more important than hostile public opinion. A definite change had taken place and young couples were marrying without a fête, receiving the full brunt of community criticism and the epithets of *kras* ("stingy"), beggars and dogs.

Two important socio-economic phenomena are associated with marriage in the Valley of Marbial. The first has to do with the periodicity of unions during the year. Tracing a graph of marriage per month from January to December, the line presents an irregular "U"-shape, starting at its highest in January, reaching its lowest between August-October, only to climb steadily again during the last two months of the year. The curve is a social projection of the economic cycle of Marbial. In January the coffee harvest is at its peak, and the cash thus earned is spent among other things, for weddings; as the harvest wanes, so does the frequency of unions. During the summer morte-saison, the figure drops practically to zero, to rise anew with the start in October of the new coffee crop.

The other socio-economic phenomenon associated with marriage in the valley is its regionalism. The rural sections of Marbial, Cochon-Gras and Fond-Melon are contiguous and fairly accessible to each other. Inhabitants from all three sections gather frequently in Cochon-Gras at the Catholic chapel and at the market; their relations are cordial and ties of *compadrazgo*

among them are common. We have pointed out the prejudices the dwellers of these rural sections of the valley have against their neighbours of the upper Gosseline River, those of Lafond (closer to Jacmel) and the men of Cap-Rouge (accused of being heiress-hunters). But whether they are from Marbial, Cochon-Gras or Fond-Melon, they consider themselves good, normal, equal and honest *kiltivatè*. Yet, out of a sample of seven random years between 1930 and 1946, the incidence of marriage among residents of the same rural section was surprisingly high, as shown in the following figures based upon the residence of the groom:

Cochon-Gras	55 out of a total of 72 (76%)
Fond-Melon	50 out of a total of 53 (94%)
Marbial	15 out of a total of 18 (83%)

When the unions were not between residents of the same section they almost always involved parties from contiguous ones; thus Cochon-Gras, which enjoys a central position, had the lowest percentage of "in-unions", but of the 17 marriages with outsiders, 12 were with girls from contiguous sections. The same applies to Fond-Melon, and even more fully to Grande-Rivière, where 30 weddings out of 31 were between common residents.

The explanation of section endogamy is twofold and shows a compromise satisfactory to the cultural attitudes and economic interests of both parties. A man prefers to marry within his own community for prestige reasons, and in order to draw more advantage from the cultivation of his wife's plot; if the land is far away he will have to share the crop. The bride wishes to keep, if possible, daily contact with her family, and if she goes to live a long way off, her visits will be restricted. The result is regional endogamy.

We have some data on the age of marriage based upon a total of 478 unions celebrated between 1930 and 1945 (with the exception of February 1943) at the Catholic parish. Nobody under 18 had married, but whereas 28 girls (5.9 per cent) between 18 and 21 years became wives, only 7 males (1.4 per cent) of the same age-group married. The same discrepancy by sex prevails between 22-25 years of age: 16.2 per cent females vs. 7.1 per cent males. The difference almost disappears for the next group, 26-30, showing 21.7 per cent women for 20.0 per cent men. The males takes the lead from 31-35 years, the percentage in their favour being 20.2 against 14.7. It is again nearly equal (12.3 per cent male, 13.4 per cent female) in the age-group 36-40. Finally in the 41-45 years we find 55 men (11.5 per cent) for 41 women (8.7 per cent), after which the number of men is at least double that of women. Those late marriages, as noted, are mainly made up of couples previously living in consensual unions. As a rule the groom is older than the bride; but in 53 cases or 11.3 per cent, the reverse is true.

A sample survey conducted in Port-au-Prince in 1957, indicated for 50 upper-class cases a much higher percentage of marriages for both sexes in the age-groups 18-30 than for Marbial. Whereas only 28.5 per cent male and 43.8 per cent female Marbial folk were married at 30, in the urban sample the proportions were 42 per cent and 66 per cent respectively, the difference

being due, we believe, to strictly economical reasons. In 1948, only one out of three peasants aged 30 or under could face the crushing expenses associated with marriage in the Valley of Marbial.

C. Consensual Unions and *Plasaj*.

Addressing the Haitian people on January 1, 1945, President Lescot noted that more than 80 per cent of the children then living were born out of wedlock. The same social condition prevails in the whole Caribbean, but Haiti comes en tête de liste for illegitimacy, with Jamaica (72 per cent), Grenada (71 per cent), Barbados (70 per cent) and French Guiana (65 per cent) not far behind.¹³ Simpson¹⁴ even puts the figure for a northern region of Haiti at 85 per cent, while for Marbial, the Catholic baptismal records indicated a precise 67.2 per cent in 1948. Haitian scholars usually hold that slavery and subsequent political instability are responsible for the situation, while a few see it as resulting from plural unions imposed upon the peasantry by land fragmentation. Evidently the root of the matter lies in consensual unions, known in Haiti as *plasaj*, but little effort has been made toward classifying *plasaj*, and yet no single factor seems fully to explain it. The common idea is that the peasant aims at and succeeds in, investing his profits in land; but due to the scarcity of real-estate, he acquires tillable plots at too great a distance from his residence to be able to cultivate and watch them personally. The solution is to take a *fâm-jadé*, a "field wife", whom he establishes on the land and with whom he will eventually have children. While this may be true, the practice cannot be responsible for the 80 per cent of all births which are illegitimate, nor for the ratio in Marbial, of one married couple to 2 *plase*. According to background motivation we could classify consensual unions in Marbial and most of rural Haiti under three headings: (1) sexual; (2) economic; (3) poverty. While the first two categories may be intermixed, the third category stands out, and represents the largest group. The main characteristic of the sexual concubinate is its non-profitable nature — it is a costly pleasure in which few peasants already married or openly "established" can indulge. The rare Marbial folk known to have had mistresses kept them in the town of Jacmel or, in still fewer instances, built a hut for them on the family compound; in the latter case, the female became a field wife of sorts, tilling a small "garden" and sharing the crop on a 50-50 basis with her lover. Her work, however, represented no gain to the man since he could have cultivated the plot with his kinfolk or alone, keeping the whole harvest. Both sexual and economic unions mean polygyny with definite differential status attributed to the female participants and the resulting offspring. Before discussing these social implications let us analyse what we label "poverty" *plasaj*. The prohibitive overall cost of a religious wedding has been, we hope, duly underlined to make clear that at most only one peasant out of three can foot

¹³Goode, William J. "Illegitimacy in the Caribbean," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 25, 1960, pp. 22-30.

¹⁴Simpson, George E. "Sexual and Family Institutions in Northern Haiti," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 44, 1942, pp. 635-674.

the bill in his life-time. If at the age of 30 most peasants of both sexes have entered into one kind of union or another, only a very small minority has married outright. The remaining majority choose *plasaj*, not as a way out of the responsibilities of marriage and the lasting nature of its ties, but on account of their poverty. Even within this broad category of "poverty" *plasaj*, the Marbial peasant draws some fine distinctions: a couple of *moun respé* unable to go to church for economic reasons will enter into a formal concubinate openly announced as "*plasaj* in view of marrying," meaning that as soon as their financial resources allow it they will perform the religious ceremony and give a wedding party. In some instances of this formal concubinate between young people, the letter of demand is addressed to the family of the girl, specifying the good intentions of the suitor. Though wedding rings are not purchased, the private ceremony is blessed by a bush priest; out of consideration the concubine might be even referred to as "Mrs. So-and-so," which is never the case with the more common type of consensual unions entered into by the lower peasant class.

In Marbial, a number of attitudes stress the consciousness of this stratification of unions. A ring-wearing wife, a *fâm kay*, a housewife, is addressed and referred to, even by her in-laws, only as *Madâm* plus her husband's first name. Two brothers talking about each other's wife will usually refer to each as "your wife," only very seldom by first name. In contrast, a youngster may mention his uncle's concubine by her first name, whatever her age, and only when addressing her uses the vocative "aunt" out of respect. Outsiders refer to and address wives only as "Mrs. X" (her husband's first name), refer to concubines as the "woman of so-and-so," but out of courtesy address them in the same way as wives. In disputes between women, a wife is wont to use pitilessly her social advantage over a concubine: "Look at my ring, you are nothing but a *plasé* woman. My wedding cost fifty dollars!" — and such arguments reach their mark. In 1948, few *plasé* women missed a chance to explain why they were not married and most pointed to poverty as the explanation. Lastly, our informants held that in the case of economic *plasaj*, i.e. polygyny, a widower, if he decides to remarry, would hesitate to bring a garden wife into his house "because her reputation has been lowered." The real motive may be different; a garden wife nowadays often belongs to another community and owns little or no land and a peasant who maintains one or more garden wives is relatively well-off; hence it is more profitable for him to find a woman from his own community, who might add her land to his, while enjoying the full respect of neighbours and kin.

Poverty *plasaj* actually shows a high degree of stability. Children born of such unions are registered as "natural," being fully and willingly recognized by their fathers. They are legal heirs, and subsequent marriage of the parents raises them to legitimate status. In comparison, the garden wife faces great occupational hazards. Even when the man is not married and is only formally *plasé*, she occupies what could be called the position of second concubine and her children, as in the case of a married man, are considered as *pitit déro*

"outside children," illegitimates, by both father and community. On strict legal grounds, of course, if the father is not married, the "outside children" would be on the same footing as those born of his formal concubine, i.e., "natural" — but the garden wife usually either fails to register her children or does so without the participation of the father. Consequently, it is solely the liberality of their biological father which guarantees such offspring the inheritance of some land (usually the plot entrusted to the care of the garden wife). Genealogies of many important families in Marbial reveal for past generations branches sprung from economic consensual unions. Some of the concubines were said to belong to "good local families" with substantial land holdings. Co-residence of wife and concubines or house concubine and garden women within the same large *lakou* was frequently reported by informants. Though intrigues and magic were not absent, on the whole, harmony is said to have prevailed, thanks to the unchallenged authority of the *lakou* chief. The situation has deteriorated since; and another occupational hazard the garden wife faces is summary dismissal, most of the time at the instigation of the wife. Co-residence has become extremely rare, and the male peasant is more and more aware of the uneconomical nature of polygyny. When property fragmentation poses the problem of cultivation and protection against thieves, he prefers a sharecropping arrangement to the former solution, which meant a greater number of potential heirs, and the loss to his nuclear family of the profits invested in land.

Possibly in the past, when land holdings were relatively large and acquisition of new plots easier than today, economic *plasaj*, besides securing more subsistence wealth, represented a tendency to convert that wealth into prestige, through as large a number as possible of women and dependents, a behaviour pattern reminiscent of that prevalent in some regions of West Africa.¹⁵

Economic *plasaj* is on the wane in Marbial and, as indicated, even poverty *plasaj* is receding. If in 1943 few young couples felt brave enough to face community criticism and benefit from the "devotion marriage" offered by the Catholic priest (it meant a free ceremony on the condition of going barefoot to the altar), by 1948 the younger generation was ready to marry modestly in order to grant legitimacy to their offspring.

D. Family Relations.

Normal husband-wife relations may be impaired on the first night of married life if it turns out that the bride is not a virgin and has failed to make this known during the engagement period. According to informants, the deceived man has the right to claim back from his in-laws half the cash amount he gave them presumably to pay for the wedding party. That sum is the same one Price-Mars (writing about Kenscoff, a mountain community Southeast of Port-au-Prince), says is called "payment of the girl's happiness . . .

¹⁵Bohannon, Paul, "Some Principles of Exchange and Investment Among the Tiv," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 57, 1955, pp. 60-70.

a sum previously agreed upon as a *sine qua non* price of the parents' consent."¹⁶ Some theoretical implications may be drawn from the custom but first let us quote a full Marbial version of the consequences of non-virginity:

When a man marries and finds out that his wife is not a *tifi* (i.e. a girl, a virgin) he has the right to send her back to her parents because she is not what he was told she was. If he keeps her he would be in his right to mistreat her and impose the heaviest tasks upon her and so, sooner or later, the marriage would break up; but few men go to such extremes. Usually the offended husband claims back from his in-laws half the money he gave them before the wedding and in that way he has no more right to behave harshly. It is better to refund the money in order to avoid scandal and separation.

The first inference is that non-virginity becomes a vice *rédhibitoire*, the payment by the groom including the guarantee of certain rights and supposing certain qualities to exist in the bride. The second allows us to consider the financial arrangement as an economic transaction comparable to the controversial bride-price or bridewealth trait of many African cultures discussed by Mair,¹⁷ Bohannan¹⁸, and Gray¹⁹, among others. The pride of the married woman in the price of her wedding, quoted above in relation to dispute with concubines, might also point to such an interpretation.

A key to the understanding of husband-wife relations is the principle of marital authority, which the totality of our informants was bent to maintain. A man is free to go "about his business" without having to report where he is going or where he has been; such liberty is denied the wife or concubine. Once a man hands his partner the daily or weekly expenses of the house, she is not supposed to pry into his spending. Not long ago the male's superiority manifested itself further in the eating habits — all adult men of a *lakou* ate first, being attended by one or two "dames." When they were through the "dames," whatever their age or status, had their meal with the children. In the case of a nuclear family, the man sat down to eat while his wife or concubine stood at the door; this was considered the proper behaviour. Today's reality is different: if the male still thinks of the ways of upholding his authority, the growing economic role of the woman compels him to adopt a more amiable attitude. In the past as now, peasant women worked hard in the field, the market and *komès*, *kékay* the sale of imported goods, but their gains were not as indispensable to the family budget as is the case today. The economic importance of the woman projects itself first of all on the division of labour. In the past a man considered it utterly improper to cook his food; today the one task he still refuses to undertake is the washing of his clothes. During the idle periods of the agricultural cycle, a father will stay home and look after the infants, clean the house and even cook, while his partner goes for a day or more to a distant market. These tasks fall upon the man because of the breaking-up of the traditional *lakou* life where

¹⁶Price-Mars, Jean, *op. cit.*, 1928, p. 216.

¹⁷Mair, Lucy P. "African Marriage and Social Change," in Phillips, A. (ed.) *Survey of African Marriage and Family Life*, Oxford University Press, London, 1953.

¹⁸Bohannan, Paul, *op. cit.*

¹⁹Gray, Robert F. "Sonjo Bride-Price and the Question of African 'Wife-Purchase'," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 62, 1960, 34-57.

a sister or an aunt would have graciously agreed to perform them. It is worth indicating that some well-to-do peasants declared that they denied their wives the permission to engage in some productive activity not because they considered it below their status, but because "a money-earning woman becomes *âgrâ*" — insolent, outspoken and challenging to their authority.

When the male was the chief purveyor of subsistence, few women, we were told, dared question his extra-marital relations, whether rooted in sexual or economic *plasaj*. Nowadays, many wives or concubines whose contribution to the narrow family budget often equals that of their men, protest against superfluous expenses and the cost of garden women and mistresses, thus bringing into husband-wife relations the idea of exclusive cohabitation for both partners.

Notwithstanding these changes, husband-wife relations still present a high degree of formalism. It is more common to see two people of the same sex than a couple holding hands in public. A couple, whether *plasé* or married, seldom show tenderness and love even in front of their kins. They may praise mutually their kindness and devotion but hardly ever will they sit within touching distance of each other. In poor homes the man usually sat on a chair while his mate sat on a low stool or crouched at a respectful distance.

The same formalistic pattern dominated parent-sibling relations in the past. *Timoun*, children, were different beings, and were sternly taught never to be "between the legs of the elders", or "under their mouths or eyes". A child should never look parents, grandparents and elderly strangers in the eye, but should lower his head and answer in a high-pitched voice when addressed. The aim of education was to give youngsters the sense of *krétif*, of fear and respect — and the surest means was by frequent, merciless whippings once the child reached his sixth or seventh year. Paternal authority was absolute and made itself felt directly to the siblings; the mother, from accounts of mature informants, appears as severe and as quick to punish as the father. Offences such as whistling, stealing fruit from a neighbour, slowness in performing errands, or leaving the *lakou* without permission, called for flogging. Even a married son was not beyond corporal punishment, with the distinction, however, that the father would assert his authority using a *batô*, a stick instead of a whip (a difference reminiscent of Des-salines, the hero of Haitian independence, who decided that vagrancy and laziness be punished with the stick, rather than the whip associated with colonial slavery).

Sternness contrasted with the leniency shown in infant training. Under the age of about six (birthdays are often unknown and are not celebrated), infants were and are still amazingly free to behave as they please, and little or no effort is made to train them. They crawl around, eat dirt, step into the circle of grown-ups, chatter and ask questions. Occasionally they will be reprimanded and struck lightly if they come near the fire. But, precisely when "a child is able to fetch his father fire to light his pipe" without danger

of burning himself, he is considered as having attained the age of reason and must show understanding, obedience, respect and willingness to share responsibilities. It is not rare, for instance, to find a child of ten left in charge of his younger siblings and handling the situation with great poise; thus age becomes associated with authority among siblings. Such authority, however, tends to disappear during adulthood, when sibling rivalry is given a free rein in the form of economic competition, as pointed out earlier. Sibling relations become very matter-of-fact and services such as field labour, house-building, land mortgages and money-lending follow a strict business pattern.

From the recollections of elderly informants and present-day observation, we may conclude that parent-sibling relations have lost much of their former severity. Sixty years ago the very same pattern of strict education was prevalent in the cities; but since then foreign concepts of more permissive socialization have made themselves felt among the urbanites, who in turn have influenced the peasantry in Marbial. Also among the moderating factors may be included the opening of local schools, the permanent presence of a Catholic priest, and the Protestant missions.

It is relatively easy to generalize values and attitudes related to parent-sibling relations, since most parents are able to express themselves in concrete terms on the topics of socialization and the ideal behaviour of children. Informants are less articulate when dealing with the subject of wife-and-in-law and husband-and-in-law relations. In Marbial, patrilocality is dominant and the wife or concubine faces the task of adapting herself to life in a strange milieu. Far from severing her ties with her family, she will try to visit them daily, distance allowing, and will go to her mother at the time of childbirth or, at least, request her presence. It results that full confidence and intimacy seldom grow between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, and here also relations tend to assume a certain formalism aggravated by the often heard criticism of *prétèsièz* addressed to the young wife. To be *prétèsièz* or haughty seems to stem from an attitude of superiority rooted in education and family prestige as compared with the standing of the in-laws. The wife must not give the impression that her marriage or *plasaj* constitutes a rise in status, an attitude already apparent in the calculated slowness of her family in answering the letter of demand. When she definitely belongs to a family of lower status, it might be the mother-in-law who adopts the role of *prétèsièz*, hinting at her son's superior manners and wealth. If the father-in-law is more discreet about status in his relations with his son's spouse it cannot be said either, for the cases studied, that he treats her with unrestricted cordiality. True enough, he addresses her as *mafi*, my daughter, refers to her as *madâm* (plus husband's first name), and is not unwilling, when disputes arise between the couple, to take her side against his son when in the wrong; but still, daily contacts are tinged with the ever-present formality of face-to-face family relations.

Paradoxically, husband-and-in-law relations appear as somewhat less rigid,

possibly because of less frequent contacts susceptible to provoke frictions and personality conflicts. A responsible husband will find his father-in-law somewhat inclined to moralize about the virtues of family life and will easily succeed in maintaining friendly rapport with him. In case of misbehaviour (stinginess, mistreatment and too loose sexual behaviour), he has more to fear from his mother-in-law than from his wife's father. When trouble breaks out with her man, a wife or concubine usually threatens him, as an ultimate recourse, with "going to her mother's home," or calling her mother for help. In all the known cases where wives openly challenged their husband's extravagant expenses with mistresses or *fâm jadé*, public opinion held that they did so at the instigation of their mothers.

Writing about Northern Haiti, Simpson states that "divorce seldom occurs among the peasants. Divorce actions are expensive."²⁰ The affirmation holds true for Marbial where not one single case of divorce was recorded among the ruralites. However, to the economic factor we would add a few secondary considerations, at least for Marbial. The influence of the Catholic priest is strongly felt in the maintenance of marriage bonds, yet not so thoroughly as to impede a separated couple from entering independently into consensual unions in order to satisfy both sexual drives and economic needs. In our opinion the high cost of legal action is not the only block to divorce, since peasant families frequently plunge themselves into ruinous lawsuits over land. An informant hinted at the reluctance to go to court and expose publicly the intimacies of conjugal life as another force working against divorce. The solution, then, is separation either amiably settled or formally sanctioned by the justice of the peace in Jacmel. *Plasé* unions of the poverty type enjoy as high a degree of stability as marriage, and in case of separation, properties are divided according to precise customs. When the couple has established itself on the land of the woman, the departing male is supposed to "pick up his trunk", which means gathering his wardrobe, tools and the few personal belongings he brought to the home. Linen, kitchen-ware, glassware and the like remain with the woman. In the more frequent case of patrilocality, the wife or concubine is entitled to all the movable furniture (she usually divides this, however), and even is in her right to dismantle the hut and have it carted away to her family *lakou*. She has the right to keep all the children if minors, but when the separation is caused by the woman's adultery the father may claim the male children. In Mirebalais, a town of some importance and seat of a justice of the peace, a few divorces occur, and when the ex-wife enters into a *plasaj* or remarries by civil ceremony, she is still usually addressed as *Madâm* plus the name of her first husband. It is believed, furthermore, that at her death she goes to live with her first husband.

Whether he was married or *plasé*, a separated man is under obligation, if in the neighbourhood, to come back to attend the burial of his deceased mate. When a man dies, if he had a garden wife besides his housewife, the former, if childless, vacates the premises and the land she was entrusted with; if she

²⁰Simpson, George E., *op. cit.*, 1942, p. 660.

had borne the man children, the widow in most cases will leave her the usufruct of the property, granting her some measure of security. A few peasants will take care in their will and under the legal clause of "liberalities" to assure their illegitimate or natural children a share of their properties, consisting of the plot entrusted to the garden wife at the start of the union with her. This splitting up of real estate in part deprives the legitimate offspring of the savings of their father and of the benefits of his work. Consciousness of that loss, we believe, is becoming one of the main factors at work against the traditional plurality of unions in rural Marbial. Whereas almost all of the generation of peasants born around 1880 had had garden wives, only one out eleven of their descendants born between 1915 and 1920 had them. In 1948, only a handful of well-to-do landowners stuck to the idea that polygyny was both prestigious and economically profitable.

T
port
wes
it fo
of t
The
Scot
ern
four
Prov
settl
sail,
strat
lay
Pan
as a
pirat
F
pear
as t
land
estat
and
over
Islan
were
C
Jam
cour
from
cal i
prim
para

¹TT
the S
search

Household and Family on Providencia¹

By

PETER J. WILSON

The Colombian island of Providencia lies nearly 500 miles north of the port of Cartagena and 400 miles south-west of Jamaica, in the far south-western corner of the Caribbean. Together with the island of San Andrés, it forms an Intendencia within the Republic of Colombia. The population of the island is approximately 2,000 and has been so for the past 50 years. The present population was first settled in 1788 when Francis Archbold, the Scottish captain of a slave ship, received permission from the Spanish government to settle on the island. He brought with him his daughter, and four other planters from Jamaica, together with their slaves. Before 1788 Providencia, which was then known as Old Providence Island, had been settled and resettled many times by England and Spain. In the days of sail, when the power of Spain was at its height, Providencia was of great strategic importance both to Spain and to her rival, England. The island lay just off the routes of the treasure galleons that plied the Main from Panama to Havana, and its natural but inaccessible harbour made it ideal as a pirates' lair. Buccaneer days came to an end in 1821, after the French pirate Luis Aury, was killed there in a fall from his horse.

From the beginning the population was a mixture of Africans and Europeans. The latter were plantation owners who raised cotton and tobacco as their main crops. Imported Africans were their slaves. About 1850 the land was divided into 14 estates, each associated with a family. These estates were subdivided among members of the family through inheritance, and in about 1855, one part of the island — the south-west — was made over to the emancipated slaves. Additional immigrants from the Cayman Islands settled on the island in the 1880's and 1890's, and these persons were principally white.

Culturally, the contemporary population of Providencia is English and Jamaican, yet it belongs politically to Colombia, a Spanish-speaking, Catholic country. To this day Providencia has succeeded in preserving a culture distinct from that of the mother country. The reasons for this include the geographical isolation of the island from the mainland, making formal control with primitive means of communication difficult; and the smallness and comparative insignificance of the island in a Republic fraught with internal

¹The research on which this paper is based was carried out with the financial support of the Social Science Research Council, the Society for Research into Problems of Sex, The Research Institute for the Study of Man, and the Department of Anthropology, Yale University.

political tension since its inception. Providencia has thus been left to fend very much for itself. As a result, it has sought social and economic ties with the English-speaking areas of the Caribbean and Central America, as well as with the United States. These ties in turn have perpetuated cultural distinctiveness. In particular there have been close connections with Panama, Nicaragua and Jamaica. Only recently has the Colombian government shown any interest in the island. It has voted considerable sums of money for the installation of an airport, electricity, a water supply and other public utilities. This, coupled with the fact that opportunity in Panama has in recent years been considerably reduced, has led islanders to turn more to the mainland of Colombia for their economic and cultural needs. It is particularly important to note that emigration from the island, which is on a considerable scale, has shifted from Panama to San Andrés and to Colombia.

The island itself is a rugged, volcanic mass, measuring five miles by three at its widest points. The irregularly shaped hills radiate out from the highest central point, known as Peak (1,190') and go down to the sea. They are covered with rich pasture and fertile soil, and in many cases thick woodland. The small valleys in between and the lower slopes have been cleared, and are used as gardens which supply such crops as cassava, beans, peas, sweet potatoes, yams, sugar cane, corn, melons, pumpkins, squash, pineapples, banana, plantain, coconut, papaya, oranges and the like. The rich pastures feed excellent cattle and horses, while pigs and chickens fend largely for themselves in the environs of the houses, and the sea supplies ample fish for the diet. Staples such as rice and flour are imported principally from Cartagena and Panama, together with lumber and cement for houses, and other manufactured articles such as kerosene, canned foods, cloth, pots, shoes and furniture. The people themselves live in 14 quite separate communities located around the perimeter of the island and connected to each other by a recently constructed dirt road. These communities vary in size from a population of 40 to over 300. The capital, St. Isabel, is located on the northern end of the island at the head of the harbour. Here are situated the wharf, government offices, a government clinic, the principal schools and churches, and the four main stores on the island.

The island has no electricity (though some wealthy individuals have a small generator to supply their own homes), no piped water supply (rain water is led from the zinc roofs into concrete cisterns, and in the event of a drought, inland hill springs are used), no bank, no hotel, and has only recently (1961) gained a road which has permitted the introduction of automobiles. However the horse is still the main means of transport. Contact with the outside world is maintained by a radio transmitter run by the Marconi Company and by five small vessels of 60 to 120 tons which ply between Providencia, San Andrés, Cartagena and Colon. These visit the island irregularly, but on the average of about once a month. Chief contact is with San Andrés, the seat of the Intendencia government and a flourishing free port.

Many Providencians leave the island to spend varying periods of time working on San Andrés as domestics and labourers. Providencia also exports cattle and crops to San Andrés, these exports being valued at nearly \$300,000 (Colombian) in 1960 (\$43,000 U.S.).

Apart from working on San Andrés island, males invariably spend a considerable period of their lives at sea, sailing either on one of the small vessels that ply the Caribbean ports of northern South America (Colombia and Venezuela) and the east coast of Central America (Panama, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Honduras), or joining one of the large merchant shipping companies such as the Gran Colombiano and United States companies. Beginning in 1903 many islanders left to work on the construction and maintenance of the Panama Canal, others set up business in Panama, and many are in business in Cartagena and Barranquilla. Length of time away from Providencia varies from a few months to 50 years, and some of course never return to the island. Women, too, leave the island to work as domestics, secretaries, and nurses, and to go to school in mainland Colombia. The various occupations taken up abroad vary with the class membership of the people concerned.

Social class is a fundamental aspect of the social structure on Providencia. The upper class is defined by the possession of wealth, education, skin colour, and, most important of all, "reputation" — the observation of correct canons of behaviour. Upper-class families live in large, well-kept houses that are well furnished, they dress smartly and they seek each other out in their social lives. That is to say, only upper-class people attend each other's parties, visit each other's homes to pass the time of day, and tend to marry each other. However, the fact that class membership depends more on individual achievements than on inherited qualities, permits a certain fluidity of membership, and means that individuals rather than families hold upper-class status. The lower class which forms the majority of the population is principally poor, Negro and mixed (though there are a large number of lower-class whites), poorly educated and its members have a "poor reputation." They live in smaller houses, frequently unpainted and sparsely furnished. They are occupied in labouring tasks and rely on the cultivation of their gardens and fishing for subsistence, whereas upper-class people earn a living by trading, as professionals, or as administrators. The small middle class consists essentially of people whose class position is in fact changing — they are moving upward or downward. They possess some, but not all, of the qualifications for membership in one of the two main classes.

On an island as small as Providencia, where the population is endogamous, and which has been settled for 173 years, the recognition of kinship ties is unavoidable. Islanders continually refer to the fact that "they are all family," but this reference to kinship has an ideological rather than a functional purpose. Ties of kinship are rarely used as the structural basis for social behaviour. Rather, they are thought of as the basis for regarding all as

equals. This valuation of equality based on kinship conflicts with the valuation of inequality, manifested by the organization of social class, and many features of the social life of the island can be explained by the structural conflict.²

The population according to age and sex is shown in Table 1. These figures were obtained by the writer; official statistics are unreliable. It will be noticed that the sex ratio for the age group 14-49 is quite unbalanced, there being almost two females to each male. In other age groups males outnumber females. This can be explained by the emigration of males from the island to the continent and Central America in order to earn cash to enable them to find excitement and experience, and later, to marry and to build a house. It should be noted that this age group, 14-49, is a critical one, for it embraces the fertile period of a woman's life and it includes the parental generation of the population as opposed to those who are children and grandparents. Also of interest is the high percentage of people over 50 years of age (25 per cent) compared to Jamaica for example, with 12½ percent in 1943.³ This also is related to the pattern of emigration whereby men who have been away from the island for up to 50 years return to live out their days there.

TABLE 1. POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX.

Age group	1958				1959			
	Male	Female	M/f ratio	Total	Male	Female	M/f ratio	Total
0 - 13	572	542	105.5	1,114	562	526	106.8	1,088
14 - 49	198	363	53.2	561	204	356	57.3	560
50 or over	266	254	104.7	520	251	241	104.1	492
TOTAL	1,036	1,159	89.4	2,195	1,017	1,123	90.5	2,140

*M/f ratio of males per 100 females.

The crude rate of natural increase (i.e. proportion of births over deaths) is 24.5 per 1,000, which means that the population would double itself in 40 years. This compares with Roberts' figure for the crude rate of natural increase of 17.7 for Jamaica in 1948⁴ and Coombs' and Davis' figure of 26.9 for Puerto Rico for the period 1949-1953⁵. The natural expansion of population of Providencia is hence comparatively high, but the pressure on natural resources is eased by emigration from the island, which has helped maintain the population at 2,000.

For a sample of 84 women the average age at first pregnancy was 19.6 years, though there are considerable differences between members of different social classes — average age for upper-class girls was 22.8 years, for middle class-girls 22.4 years and for lower-class girls 15.8 years (this latter

²Wilson, P. J. *The Social Structure of Providencia Isla, Colombia*. (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, Yale University, New Haven, Conn., 1961).

³Roberts, George W. *The Population of Jamaica*. Cambridge, 1957.

⁴*op. cit.*

⁵Coombs, J. W. and Davis, K. "The Pattern of Puerto Rican Fertility," *Population Studies*, 4, 1951, pp. 364-379.

figure is suspect as it was affected by the sampling, since the variance [$s^2 = 13.64$] is too great). The average number of completed pregnancies is 5.6 for upper-class women, 6.5 for middle-class women and 7.5 for lower-class women. These demographic factors suggest we are likely to find that households will contain more children and older people, and will lack members of the parental generation; clearly this will influence the composition of the household.

Household composition is also likely to be influenced by the system of mating practiced within a given population. On Providencia three types of union are distinguished: the legal, monogamous union; the non-legally sanctioned or "common law" union; and a residual category of "single unions," which includes those who may become parents, but between whom there are no recognized ties. Also important is the frequency of extra-marital mating, which includes what is referred to as "concubinage" on Providencia — the cohabitation of persons one or both of whom are married to another partner. The absence of men from the island for varying periods of time contributes directly to the high frequency of extra-marital unions indulged in by both sexes. Mating on Providencia is often plural, a man or a woman being involved with more than one partner, though not necessarily concurrently. Evidence from a sample of 86 women suggests that women who had two or more mates were more fertile than those with but one mate.⁶ There is not the same reticence to marry on Providencia as there is in Jamaica. Considerable social pressure is exercised by the churches to make people marry and gossip also serves for social control. Formerly, a man was expected to provide a house for his wife before they got married, but today, since a house is so expensive, a demonstration of his intention to build a house is sufficient. This usually takes the form of a pile of bricks or lumber on the proposed site, and it may take many years before the pile becomes a house. Until a couple moves into a house of their own they will live with one or the other set of parents — most frequently with the wife's parents (this was so in 22 out of 31 cases).

Table 2 shows the frequency of age at marriage for all marriages from September, 1949, to June, 1958. Men marry at a later age than women —

TABLE 2. FREQUENCY OF AGE AT MARRIAGE

Age	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%
15-24	16	25	40	61
25-34	28	42	12	18
35-44	8	12	6	9
45-54	7	10	5	7
55-64	4	6	2	3
65-74	3	5	1	2
TOTAL	66	100	66	100

⁶See Wilson, *op. cit.*

42 per cent of the men were married between 25 and 34 years. This difference is related to the necessity for the male to achieve a certain amount of economic independence and to do this he has to leave the island to find work.

Pre-marital freedom varies with sex and class. Lower-class males and females freely indulge in pre-marital sexual relations. But men only, in the upper class enjoy sexual freedom before marriage, women being restricted by strict chaperonage, at least while they remain on the island.

In summary, Providencia is an island that has been historically and geographically and hence culturally — cut off from the parent country, Colombia. Its culture and society have developed from the original Jamaican and English ancestry, and has received outside influence from returning emigrants who worked in Panama, Nicaragua, Colombia and the United States. The population is small and has remained constant for the past 50 years, the natural increase being counterbalanced by emigration. Economically the people depend on their gardens, on pastures for cattle, horses, pigs and chickens, on the sea which supplies an abundance of fish, and on imports of rice, flour, manufactured goods and raw materials for buildings, etc.

The social structure of the population is based on the classification of individuals into one of three classes, the complex kinship and marriage relationships, the dispersal of the population in 14 communities, and the membership of people in one of the three Churches, Roman Catholic, Baptist and Seventh Day Adventist.

The fertility of the population is high, and is apparently enhanced by the frequency of plural mating. The age and sex composition of the population is unbalanced and this is the direct result of the pattern of emigration. Emigration itself is motivated by the desire for cash; the lack of cash and work on Providencia; and perhaps ultimately — but unconsciously from the people's viewpoint — by the inability of the island to support a larger population.

It is within this framework, briefly sketched, that I shall examine household and family.

The composition of households in seven communities will be analyzed. These communities are St. Isabel, Nelly Downs, Jones Point, Old Town, Rocky Point, Smooth Water Bay and Bottom House. A brief description of each community will serve to establish the validity of this sample.

1. *St. Isabel*. Population: 184. Number of occupied houses: 44. Located at the northern tip of the harbour, St. Isabel is known as "Town" throughout the island and is the "capital" of the island. It has a monopoly of public buildings and amenities, which include the Alcaldía or government office (known as the "office"), in which is located the Mayor's office, the courtroom, the registry, the post office, the Judge's office, the treasury and the island radio transmitter, by which messages are sent from the island and where they are received. There are three schools in St. Isabel: a convent school, run by two Spanish nuns; a large government school for boys; and

the Baptist school, which is co-educational. The Roman Catholic church is at the southern end of St. Isabel, the Baptist church in the middle, behind the Alcaldía, and the Seventh Day Adventist church is at the northern end. In the middle of "town" are the four main island stores. These stores are actually the ground floors of private residences, with the owner and family living above the store. In addition to these four large stores there are three smaller ones nearby, and in another private house the owner has turned his ground floor over for the use of card and domino players, to whom he sells drinks. One other house, also on the "main" street, serves meals to policemen and customs officials. The lady also allows the use of her house for the gratification of other appetites, employing girls from Free Town. At the northern end of St. Isabel lives the island's private doctor, who holds clinic in his house. Still going north about 100 yards further on is the government clinic, a one-story stucco building with a couple of beds, a broken kerosene refrigerator, a stove, cupboard, tables and chairs, a few medical supplies, an office for the doctor and a room for the nurse. The staff, all islanders, consists of a doctor, two nurses, a clerk, a caretaker and a cleaner.

Fourteen households consist of members of the upper class; the majority of the population is "clear" (i.e. white or of very light skin), and "mixed" (i.e. dark skinned but not Negroid); the largest religious affiliation is Roman Catholic (some 63 per cent), and the remainder are Baptist with but two Seventh Day Adventist families (though one of these takes no active part in the Church). St. Isabel is the only community on the island where people engaged in trading and administration are numerically dominant over people primarily engaged in gardening, fishing and labouring.

2. *Nelly Downs*. Population: 127. Number of occupied houses: 26. The public buildings located here are the police barracks and jail and two small stores. Socially the population is diverse. There are nine upper and middle class households whose members are phenotypically mixed or clear. Religious affiliation is almost entirely Roman Catholic.

3. *Jones Point*. Population: 41. Number of occupied houses: 7. This is a very small community on the shore north of St. Isabel and a continuation of that community. It has no public buildings. The population is "clear" and "mixed" and wholly Roman Catholic.

4. *Old Town*. Population: 284. Number of occupied houses: 61. This village on the south-east side of the main bay and harbour, is less than 20 minutes walk from St. Isabel. It has three "public" buildings: a small government school, held in a rented house, with two teachers; and two small stores owned by residents. The island's baseball field is situated in Old Town. Four households have members who belong to the upper class, and the remainder of the population is lower class. Phenotypically the population is Negroid and "mixed". (The people of Old Town are not thought

of as "black", as are the people of Bottom House). Like the rest of the island the majority of people are not regular church goers, but their religious affiliation is approximately 70 per cent Baptist (of which only a fraction are active members) and 30 per cent Roman Catholic.

3. *Rocky Point*. Population: 175. Number of occupied houses: 40. The most important public building is the Seventh Day Adventist church and school, the centre of Adventist activities on the island. There is also a co-educational government school. There are two stores, one quite large. The population has six households whose members are of the upper class, the remainder being lower and middle class. Phenotypically the entire population is "mixed" with many "dark" (Negroid) people. Religious affiliation varies. One quarter of the population is Seventh Day Adventist, all of whom are devout, while the remainder of the population is divided almost equally between Catholic and Baptist, the majority of whom are not active members of their Church.

6. *Smooth Water Bay*. Population: 105. Number of occupied houses: 28. The public facilities include a Baptist church and school and two stores. The population is predominantly upper class and "clear", with some who are mixed. One-half of the community is Seventh Day Adventist, there are five households whose members are Catholic, and the remainder are Baptist. Although all the upper-class people farm, many are in fact retired professionals and administrators and traders.

7. *Bottom House*. Population: 341. Number of occupied houses: 83. There is a small Catholic church and government school. There are six small stores. Bottom House is the only community on the island where some people still live in palm thatch dwellings, while several houses have thatch kitchens attached. The people of Bottom House are known to the rest of the island as "the black people", though there are five people of "clear" skin colour, all of whom have moved into the community from outside. The population is entirely lower-class, wholly Baptist (except for one old Catholic lady). This community was established specifically, as the dwelling place for emancipated slaves in the 1850's.

The population of these communities comprises a little more than half the total population of the island, and it is also representative of all the social variations present on the island.

There are four common house types on Providencia. The poorest and most common is the small, one-, two-, or three room hut made of clapboard, with a zinc roof sloping on four sides. The house is usually on low piles. One room is used for eating and general activities and the other rooms for sleeping. Children may also sleep on the floor of the living room. The kitchen is sometimes separate, or it may be merely a bay projecting from the main house. Few houses of this size have a water cistern; instead water is collected from the roof in an oil drum. Furniture is sparse: a scrubbed table and

ben
boa
is fi
with
nets
of th
Th
than
roof
often
are r
A
vera
up t
nishe
pictu
paint
water
Th
as th
are t
3 sho
(Thro
of Sm

Ho
Two-st
Two-st
"Bunga
Saddle
Hut

TOTAL

The
presen
descri
data a
of per
the sa
as the
in the
7Smit
London,
omic St
76-108;
1957.

bench, perhaps a few rickety upright chairs, a rocker, and either a cupboard or a shelf on which crockery and utensils are kept. The bedroom is filled by a large double bed and the walls of all the rooms are covered with old posters, newspaper clippings and photographs. Paddles, fishing nets, tools and spare timber are kept balanced across the roof beams out of the way.

The "saddle back" house, with roof sloping on only two sides, is larger than the hut. It is made of wood and usually has a small bedroom in the roof, giving it the appearance of a two-storey house. These houses are more often painted, and usually have a water cistern. The rooms and furniture are much the same as in the hut.

A third house type is the single storey, large "bungalow" which has a verandah on three sides and is square in plan. These are quite large with up to six rooms. They are usually painted, set on piles, and are better furnished, with a dining room set, a set of cane chairs in the lounge, framed pictures on the walls, a sideboard or a china cabinet, and sometimes a painted interior. These houses are lived in by wealthier islanders. All have water cisterns.

The fourth type is the large two-storey house built on the same plan as the bungalow but with a genuine second storey. Many of these houses are today in a dilapidated condition, especially in Smooth Water Bay. Table 3 shows the frequency of house types in five of the sample communities. (Through an oversight I omitted to check house types in the communities of Smooth Water Bay and Bottom House.)

TABLE 3. FREQUENCY OF HOUSE TYPES

House type	St. Isabel		Nelly Downs		Old Town		Rocky Point		Jones Point		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Two-storey painted	12	27	2	8	3	5	1	2	—	—	18	10
Two-storey unpainted	3	7	3	12	1	1	4	10	—	—	11	6
"Bungalow"	11	25	5	19	4	7	3	8	3	47	26	15
Saddle back	5	11	4	15	10	16	8	20	—	—	27	15
Hut	13	30	12	46	43	71	24	60	4	53	96	54
TOTAL	44	100	26	100	61	100	40	100	7	100	178	100

The household is a kinship group. But the number of types of relatives present in different households varies. The situation is comparable to that described for areas of the West Indies by recent writers⁷. I shall present that data and analysis in the same form as these writers. The household is a group of persons, usually related to each other, who habitually eat and sleep in the same house. The head of the house is that person who is registered as the owner, his or her title being recorded in the office of the Treasurer, in the Alcaldía, St. Isabel.

⁷Smith, Raymond T. *The Negro Family in British Guiana*. Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1956; Cumper, George. "The Jamaican Family: Village and Estate," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1958, 76-108; Clarke, Edith. *My Mother who Fathered Me*. George Allen and Unwin Ltd. London, 1957.

TABLE 4. MALE AND FEMALE HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Household head	St. Isabel	Nelly Downs	Old Town	Rocky Point	Jones Point	Smooth Water Bay	Bottom House	Total
Male	29	21	37	19	4	19	36	165
Female	6	4	17	18	2	6	19	72
Lone Male	2	—	4	1	—	1	4	12
Lone Female	7	1	3	2	1	—	5	19
TOTAL	44	26	61	40	7	26*	64*	268

*Note: Two houses in Smooth Water Bay and 19 houses in Bottom House are omitted

TABLE 5. STATUS OF FEMALE HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Status	St. Isabel	Nelly Downs	Old Town	Rocky Point	Jones Point	Smooth Water Bay	Bottom House	Total
Common-law widow	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	4
Common-law wife	—	—	2	2	—	—	5	9
Unmarried mother	1	1	6	4	1	1	7	21
Widow	3	3	8	10	1	4	2	31
Separated	2	—	—	2	—	—	1	5
Single, lives with brother	—	—	1	—	—	1	5	7
TOTAL	6	4	17	18	2	6	24	77

Table 4 compares the number of male and female heads of households. Although the number of male heads is greater, nearly 27 per cent of the total households have a female head. This will be explained below. Of interest is the fact that 31 individuals live alone. Most of these are elderly and live next door to a child or close relative. Table 5 shows the marital status of the female heads. In only 16 cases out of 77 is a female the head of a household where a male is present who could compete theoretically for her position — namely, a woman living with her common-law husband, or a sister living with her brother. The widows are living in houses they have inherited from their husbands which will pass to the children on their deaths. The unmarried mothers in every community except Bottom House are all over 50 years of age. By saving, and with assistance of their children and the fathers of their children they have been able to build their own houses. Four of the unmarried mothers in Bottom House are in their twenties and live in cheap palm thatch cottages. The large number of widows in Rocky Point (10) seems to be fortuitous, and is unusual.

Tables 6 and 7 give a generalized description of the composition of households with male and female heads, and tables 8 and 9 give the relationship in detail.

Turning to the composition of households with male heads, it will be seen from Tables 6 and 8 that although there is a large variety of relatives present, the largest proportion (67 per cent) includes the head, his spouse and their children, i.e., the nuclear family. One hundred and forty-seven of the 165 households with a male head contain the spouse as well. Of the

TABLE 6. RELATIONSHIP OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS TO MALE HEAD

Relationship	St. Isabel		Nelly Downs		Old Town		Rocky Point		Jones Point		Smooth Water Bay		Bottom House		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Spouse	24	19	19	22	30	18	17	22	4	16	13	25	30	29	137	22
Child	83	66	53	61	77	47	37	47	18	72	22	41	49	48	339	53
Grandchild	10	7	5	6	24	15	10	13	—	—	9	17	9	9	67	10
Spouse of child	1	1	2	2	6	4	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	—	10	2
Kin of head	2	2	1	1	12	7	4	5	—	—	1	2	6	6	26	4
Kin of spouse	4	3	1	1	6	4	4	5	1	4	2	2	1	1	19	3
Adopted	2	2	6	7	9	5	6	8	2	8	3	7	6	6	34	5
Unrelated	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	1	1	3	1
TOTAL	126		87		164		78		25		53		102		635	

TABLE 7. RELATIONSHIP OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS TO FEMALE HEAD

Relationship	St. Isabel		Nelly Downs		Old Town		Rocky Point		Jones Point		Smooth Water Bay		Bottom House		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Spouse	—	—	—	—	2	2	2	2	—	—	1	7	2	4	7	3
Child	10	72	8	57	32	54	26	45	2	22	6	43	20	57	104	51
Grandchild	2	14	3	22	14	24	17	30	7	78	—	—	3	12	46	23
Spouse of child	—	—	1	7	3	6	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	3
Kin of head	2	14	—	—	2	2	7	10	—	—	2	14	8	23	21	10
Kin of spouse	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	—	1	8	—	—	2	1
Adopted	—	—	2	14	6	12	4	7	—	—	2	14	—	—	14	7
Unrelated	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	14	2	4	4	2
TOTAL	14		14		59		58		9		14		35		203	

TABLE 8. DETAILS OF RELATIONSHIP OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS TO MALE HEAD

Relationship	St. Isabel No.	Nelly Downs No.	Old Town No.	Rocky Point No.	Jones Point No.	Smooth Water Bay No.	Bottom House No.	Total No.
Wife	21	12	28	14	4	12	11	102
C-1 wife	3	7	2	3	—	1	19	35
Son of Head and spouse under 14 yrs.	35	23	19	17	10	10	14	128
over 14 yrs.	5	2	4	1	2	2	4	20
single father	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	3
married	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Dtr. of head and spouse under 14 yrs.	26	9	24	12	4	6	15	96
over 14 yrs.	5	5	4	4	2	3	8	31
single mother	—	—	2	2	—	1	—	5
married	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	3
Son. of Hd. only	5	3	10	1	—	—	4	23
Dtr. of Hd. only	6	6	9	—	—	—	—	21
Son. of Wi. only	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Dtr. of Wi. only	2	1	—	—	—	1	2	6
Son of C-1 Wife	—	—	—	2	—	—	2	4
Dtr. of C-1 Wife	—	—	—	2	—	—	2	4
Son's wife	—	—	3	—	—	—	1	4
Dtr.'s husband	1	2	2	—	—	—	—	5
Dtr.'s C-1 husband	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Brother	—	—	1	—	—	1	1	3
Sister	1	—	3	2	—	—	3	9
Bro.'s child	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	2
Sis.'s child	—	—	6	2	—	—	—	8
Father	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Mother	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	3
Son's son	1	—	7	3	—	3	5	19
Son's dtr.	1	1	3	1	—	4	—	10
Dtr.'s son	4	2	5	3	—	1	3	18
Dtr.'s dtr.	4	2	9	3	—	2	1	21
Adopted son	—	2	7	3	1	1	3	17
Adopted dtr.	2	4	2	3	1	1	3	16
Wife's mother	3	1	—	—	1	—	1	6
Wife's sister	1	—	2	—	—	—	—	3
Wi. Da. son	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Wi. Da. dtr.	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
TOTAL	128	86	163	78	25	49	105	634

children present, the largest number (224 out of 275) are under 14 years of age. This tends to reflect the situation whereby children over 14 leave the island to go to school or work.

The proportion of kin of head and kin of spouse in the households is small (7 per cent are kin of head only, 2.5 per cent are kin of spouse only), but it helps to confirm that the male is the focus, as well as the head, of the household.⁸ The presence of the spouse's mother can be accounted for

⁸Cf. Smith, R. T., *op. cit.*, 1956, where the presence of the female's kin in greater proportion is suggested as a diagnostic of matricentrality.

TABLE 9. DETAILS OF RELATIONSHIP OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS TO FEMALE HEADS

Relationship	St. Isabel No.	Nelly Downs No.	Old Town No.	Rocky Point No.	Jones Point No.	Smooth Water Bay No.	Bottom House No.	Total No.
Husband	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
C-1 husband	—	—	2	2	—	—	2	6
Son. of head and spouse	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
under 14 years	—	—	5	—	—	—	8	13
over 14 yrs.	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
single father	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
married	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dtr. of head and spouse	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
under 14 yrs.	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
over 14 yrs.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
single mother	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
married	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Son of head only	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
under 14 yrs.	4	1	3	3	—	—	6	17
over 14 yrs.	1	2	8	3	—	2	—	16
Single father	—	—	1	2	1	—	—	4
married	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	3
Dtr. of head only	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
under 14 yrs.	2	—	3	5	—	2	4	16
over 14 yrs.	2	3	5	5	1	2	—	18
single mother	1	1	4	6	—	—	—	12
married	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	2
Father	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mother	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	2
Brother	—	—	1	—	—	—	3	4
Sister	1	—	—	1	—	1	3	6
Adopted son	—	1	5	3	—	2	—	11
Adopted Dtr.	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	3
Son's son	—	—	3	5	1	—	2	11
Son's dtr.	—	—	3	3	6	—	1	13
Dtr.'s son	2	—	3	5	—	—	—	10
Dtr.'s dtr.	—	3	5	4	—	—	—	12
Son's wife	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	3
Dtr.'s husband	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	2
Brother's son	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	3
Sister's son	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	2
Sister's dtr.	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Sis. dtr.'s son	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Sis. dtr.'s dtr.	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	2
Son of sp. only	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	2
Unrelated	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	4
TOTAL	14	14	59	58	9	14	35	203

specifically. In three cases a man is married to a mainland Colombian and brought his mother-in-law over to the island; a fourth case is that of the Baptist minister, whose mother-in-law is the headmistress of the Baptist school; and the other two cases concern one man from San Andrés who brought over his wife's mother and sister after the father-in-law died.

Grandchildren in these households are chiefly daughters' children, frequently illegitimate, who are being cared for by the head of his spouse.

Nevertheless there are ten households where the grandchildren are in fact sons' children which is at least some indication that a man may be willing to assume responsibility for his illegitimate children. There is a small but noticeable proportion of adopted children (5 per cent). These are treated as equals of own children and either children of distant kin or of non-kin, often orphaned or born into a household too poor to support them.

The presence of other categories of relatives is largely the result of particular circumstances which has no general implication.

In households with female heads the most striking feature is the absence of spouses in all but four cases, all of these latter being common-law unions. As can be seen from Table 5, 73 per cent of female heads are either widows or unmarried mothers. I have already suggested that the widows are in fact only caretaker heads for their children. When they die the final stage of the "developmental cycle" of the particular family is ended. This was often explained to me in just such terms: "she (i.e., the old lady) was the last one left and it would not be right to take the house away from her." Most of the unmarried female heads in the sample are elderly or middle aged and are living with one or more of their children. It is worth noting that 77 per cent of households with female heads are in the three, poorest lower-class communities of the sample: Bottom House, Old Town and Rocky Point.

The relative percentage of sons' and daughters' children is almost the same and needs no comment (12 per cent to 10 per cent). Nor does the number and difference between the presence of the son's wife (three cases) and the daughter's husband (two cases) seem significant. In the seven cases of female-headed households where the spouse is present, there are no kin of just the spouse in the same household. In short there is no specific pattern in such households with female heads.

Unlike many other areas of the Caribbean, households in Providencia are composed principally of a set of relatives arranged in the unit we commonly call the nuclear family: a man, his mate and their children. It must be borne in mind that other Caribbean studies deal with lower-class Negro society, which has its roots in slavery and plantation organization. It must also be remembered that in the British West Indies especially, this Negro group is only part of the total population. It occupies in general a certain niche in the economy of the country. These are cash economies adjusted to world markets, where lower-class Negro people are used only for their labour and where this labour often proves dispensable since there may be too little work to do. Hence the large scale internal and external migration, which is as much seasonal as permanent. Hence, also, the precarious economic position of the Negro people in these societies. When these factors are considered in relation to household composition it can be readily understood that individual members born into a household are rarely able to remain permanently in one place to assume the various responsibilities implicit

in household membership. The difference between the relationships of mother-child and father-child are such that it is possible, should the situation so arise, that the father's tie can be minimized to the point of eradication, while the mother's tie is more difficult to dissolve. These, and doubtless many other factors are operative in the determination of household composition among the lower class Negro people in the Caribbean. Such composition generally centres around a mother and her children and is referred to as "matrifocal" or "matricentral." There is every indication that this is not the pattern among middle- and upper-class Negroes and among middle- and upper-class whites in the populations. Nor is this the pattern in Providencia.

Although there is considerable emigration from Providencia, the rationalization is somewhat different. The people of Providencia do not think of leaving the island because they *have* to; they say they leave the island because they want to. They always regard themselves as being associated with a household and being absent temporarily — "for a trip" — even though in some cases this trip lasts for 50 years! There is not the necessity for cash in order to survive in Providencia, though money is used. People think they can live quite happily from the land and the sea — even though, from the observer's viewpoint, it is quite clear they cannot. Not having a cash economy or a particularly diverse society, the material prestige items (needs?) that spur ambition for money in societies such as Jamaica are lacking. No one is particularly anxious to acquire a radio, or an easy chair; nor are there any bright lights, bars and nightclubs; nor is there a large variety of pretty, but unessential foods in cans, boxes and the like backed up by advertising.⁹ This comparative lack of needs that can only be satisfied with cash, which is so difficult to come by, in other Caribbean societies, contributes to a certain stability of relationship in Providencia — economic contentment and middle class morality. Of course there is no "statistical evidence" to back up this argument, but I shall carry it a stage further in the attempt to suggest why the nuclear family is the norm of household organization on Providencia and not normative elsewhere in the Caribbean.

Although the population is differentiated into three social classes and there are basically two ethnic groups present, yet they are related together so intimately by kinship, physical contiguity and economic interdependence that separate styles of life are virtually impossible. Furthermore the influence of the church is considerable, and is the same for all sections of the population (white and black, and lower and upper class literally rub shoulders in the tiny churches). The influence of the church in Jamaica is also considerable, but class and colour segregation is possible because of the size of the society. The church (particularly the Baptist and Adventist) enjoins

⁹It is interesting to note the gradual, and at present barely perceptible, growth of these features, and the corresponding change in morality on Providencia. The island is on the threshold of drastic change, as it is about to be developed as a tourist resort.

a certain morality upon its members — namely, marriage and the ideal American happy family (churches on Providencia are under United States guidance and members receive their weekly religious literature from the United States, including the Catholics). Even though actual church membership may be low on Providencia, the influence of Christian morality and its relation to the secular “proper” way of life is considerable, to the extent that the two are almost the same. A couple living together in common-law union are described as “married but not churchd”, and so also is a couple legally married by a civil ceremony, but not by a church ceremony.

A large number of households in Providencia can be characterized as being structured around the “extended family.” Where the ideal form of these models of the nuclear and extended families is not found, they can generally be explained as representing stages in either the formation or dissolution of the ideal form. They are at certain points in what Fortes¹⁰ has termed the “developmental cycle.” There is the added qualification that members leave and return through emigration, thereby altering the actual composition of the household.

The household on Providencia is the only social unit structured on the basis of kinship ties. The particular relationships involved are those most clearly defined by the kinship terminology: mother/father; son/daughter; brother/sister. All other terms fail to make exhaustive definitions of kinsmen. And it is within this grouping that an individual satisfies his most basic needs. With them he eats, sleeps, is brought up as a child and then brings up his children, serves and is served, gives and receives comfort and co-operation, and it is with them whom he quarrels and jokes over mutual topics. But relations between households are not based so completely on kinship ties. The structure of such ties depends more on mutual choice and benefit. This is not the place to go into such structure, but the point is that the household is the individual's chief social reference point in the society as a whole. An individual's strongest identity is with members of the household — his own if he is a father, his parents' if he is a son.

I have used the term “family” in this paper, generally in the sense that the reader will understand this as being composed of parents and children. But the word “family” on Providencia has a different meaning. Though I have stated that the household is composed primarily of a “nuclear family” the members of the household are not necessarily regarded as a family by the people themselves. A man refers to his “wife and children,” not to his family. When a man returns “home” he comes back to a group of relatives and members of his household, not to a unit such as his family. The use of the word “family” is reserved as a substitute for the terms “relative” and “related”. In explaining the relationship between two persons a man will say,

¹⁰Fortes, Meyer. “Introduction,” in Goody, Jack R. (ed.) *The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups*. Cambridge Papers in Social Anthropology, No. 1. 1958.

"him and me is family" — i.e., we are related. It is consistently claimed on Providencia "that we is all family," that is, "we are all related," not "we are all one family." The emphasis is on the fact of kinship and not on the unity of the population. It is likely that this usage of the word "family" is derived historically and is only of semantic interest. However, such usage does have a certain sociological significance.

A man is very seldom, if ever, in the presence of all his primary relatives at any one time. The children of a household leave the island when they reach adolescence so a household is rarely complete; i.e., all the members that will ever have been born into that household are rarely present together. Membership of a household is sometimes complicated by the addition of secondary relatives, adoptees and unrelated persons. Hence the "family" as we know it is hardly ever a reality to a Providencian; rather it is the household that is meaningful. An example will illustrate this. Very recently upper class people have taken to sending out invitations to dances, parties and weddings typed in Spanish. They request the presence of "Sr. y Sra. — y su familia" according to Spanish protocol, knowing that the Spanish term *familia* means immediate family as opposed to *parentesco*, the kindred. But for purposes of the invitation it is the household that is intended. Invitations in English designated the specific people to be invited — "Mr. and Mrs. — and daughters" — while sons were invited separately. The family unit, be it of orientation or of procreation is not a crucial sociological unit. It is the household that comprises the group within which the individual gains his social identity and satisfies his individual needs. It is the household for which a man works — indeed some of his children live in other households or outside the island. Where a couple live in concubinage (i.e., where one partner is married to someone other than the co-resident) the "legitimate" family is split up between at least two households. So in spite of the fact that the composition of households consists of relatives that we understand to make up the nuclear family, the complete "family" is never actually present in the household. It is not, in fact, a family, and on Providencia it is viewed as a set of people related together by primary ties, but one which may also include people more distantly related, or not related at all.

A FINAL NOTE

By

SIDNEY W. MINTZ

This issue of *Social and Economic Studies*, devoted in its entirety to papers dealing with domestic organization among the Caribbean rural lower classes, was first conceived of several years ago. At that time, the systematic study of such problems had just begun, and the need for careful analysis, both for purely scientific reasons as well as for matters of planning and policy, had just been recognized. *Social and Economic Studies* had given over its pages largely to papers dealing with the (British) West Indies, and had not yet extended its coverage to much of the rest of the Antilles. It seemed appropriate, then, to prepare an issue which would attract additional attention to the particulars of such studies, and which would reinforce a pan-Caribbean view in the social sciences, so necessary to the intellectual growth and cross-fertilization of the region as a whole.

At the same time, it was clear that an issue of this kind could not pretend to anything like completeness. To begin with, systematic study of the relevant problems has not been initiated in several key areas, for instance Cuba, where but one short paper on the theme is available.¹ In the Dominican Republic, no relevant work has been done. In Puerto Rico, in spite of the large number of papers and books dealing directly or tangentially with rural family life,² there is nothing permitting rigorous comparison with the excellent studies of domestic social structure carried out in Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana and elsewhere. Even for Haiti, except for one book and several short papers,³ the field remains quite unstudied, and Dr. Bastien's contribution to this issue is largely based on his work there in 1948.

Again, it was clear that a special issue which sought to include all of the relevant contributions would be impractical, financially and otherwise. Accordingly, this volume purports simply to give some notion of the span of study in the area, and to present some of the diverse methodological and theoretical positions of students of social structure with Caribbean interests. It is intended that the term "working papers" underline the provisional and

¹Ames, David W. "Negro Family Types in a Cuban Solar," *Phylon*, Vol. 11, 1950, pp. 159-163.

²E.g., Steward, Julian H. *The People of Puerto Rico*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Illinois, 1956, *passim*.

³Bastien, Rémy. *La Familia Rural Haitiana*, Libra, Mexico City, 1951; Simpson, George E. "Sexual and Familial Institutions in Northern Haiti," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 44, 1942, pp. 655-674; Comhaire-Sylvain, Suzanne. "Courtship, Marriage and Plasaj at Kenscoff, Haiti," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 4, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1958, pp. 210-233; Comhaire-Sylvain, Suzanne. "The Household at Kenscoff, Haiti," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1961, pp. 192-222.

exploratory character of ongoing research. We believe it would be unrealistic to assume that any of these contributions is the last word on the subject in question.

But definite progress is being made in social structural research in the Antilles. Omitting for the moment the pioneer studies of such workers as Herskovits, Beckwith, Rogler, Rosario and Campbell,⁴ one might date the new period of study from the publication of Smith's book on British Guiana.⁵ In just the past four years, students have carried on valuable research in Jamaica,⁶ Trinidad,⁷ British Guiana,⁸ Puerto Rico,⁹ Martinique,¹⁰ Carriacou and Barbados,¹¹ Providencia,¹² and elsewhere. In his comments to this volume, Davenport points out that the intensified study of social structure in the Caribbean area requires sharper and more precise methods in order to delineate the significance of relatively small distinctions among neighbouring cases. One may add that there is a further need for discussion of the differing methodological and theoretical orientations, so as to make continuing research more and more manageable for controlled comparisons.

In this connection, one of the issues requiring further reflection is the place of historical research in the study of social structure. Twenty years ago the central issue was not that of the analysis of social structure itself, but rather of the explanation, by historical reference, of the particular character

⁴Herskovits, Melville J. and Frances S. *Trinidad Village*, Knopf, New York, 1947; Herskovits, Melville J. *Life in a Haitian Valley*, Knopf, New York, 1937; Beckwith, Martha W. *Black Roadways: A Study of Jamaican Folk-life*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1929; Rogler, Charles C. *Comerio: A Study of a Puerto Rican Town*, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 1940 [University of Kansas Publications. Social Science Studies. 1940]; Rosario, José Colombán. *The Development of the Puerto Rican Jibaro and His Present Attitude Towards Society*, University of Puerto Rico, San Juan, 1935 [Monographs of the University of Puerto Rico. Series C. Social Sciences number 1]; Campbell, Albert A. *St. Thomas Negroes: A Study of Personality and Culture*, American Psychological Association, Evanston, Illinois, 1943 [Psychological Monographs, Vol. 55, No. 5].

⁵Smith, Raymond T. *The Negro Family in British Guiana*, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1957.

⁶E.g., Clarke, Edith. *My Mother Who Fathered Me: A Study of the Family in Three Selected Communities in Jamaica*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1957. Davenport, William H. "A Comparative Study of Two Jamaican Fishing Villages," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, New Haven, 1956.

⁷E.g., Braithwaite, Lloyd. "Social Stratification in Trinidad," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 2, Nos. 2 and 3, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1953, pp. 5-176.

⁸E.g., Jayawardena, Chandra. "Marital Stability in Two Guianese Sugar Estate Communities," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1960, pp. 76-100.

⁹E.g., Landy, David. *Tropical Childhood, Cultural Transmission and Learning in a Rural Puerto Rican Village*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1959; Tumin, Melvin M., with Arnold S. Feldman. *Social Class and Social Change in Puerto Rico*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1961.

¹⁰E.g., Horowitz, Michael M. "Morne-Paysan: Peasant Community in Martinique. An Approach to a Typology of Rural Community Forms in the Caribbean," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, New York, 1959; Kreiselman, Miriam. "The Caribbean Family: A Case Study in Martinique," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, New York, 1958.

¹¹E.g., Smith, Michael G. *Kinship and Community in Carriacou*, Yale University Press, New Haven, forthcoming; Greenfield, Sidney. "Family Organization in Barbados," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, New York, 1959.

¹²Wilson, Peter J. "The Social Structure of Providencia Isla, Colombia," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, New Haven, 1961.

of "the Negro family".¹³ Though the original controversy may seem profitless in the light of what has been discovered since, in fact Herskovits, Frazier and their students pioneered the study of societies almost entirely ignored previously by social scientists. At the same time that their particular arguments have been employed less in recent years, and the question of origins largely laid aside, there remains within the domain of Caribbean social history a fertile area for students of social structure. But any historical study of Caribbean social structure in the future will have to take into account the insights which recent scholarship has provided.

When G. P. Murdock underlined the relevance of history to the study of social organization, he argued that "... the form and content of any culture at any particular time will reflect its form and content at an earlier period as well as the forces and influences playing upon it at the moment."¹⁴ In expanding his argument, he contends that the dynamic approach to the study of social organization not only includes awareness of long-term historical forces, but also concerns itself with the life history of individuals. Forms of social organization change over time. And individuals pass through social systems from birth to death (and often beyond), occupying successive statuses within them, and at times also modifying them (sometimes in ways that are not entirely clear). Both of these processes have to do with the dimension of time, but viewed of course in spans of very different length.

The long-term perspective, which may be called properly historical, has to do with analysis and explanation of a very different order from that which marks short-term, developmental-cycle approaches to the same problems. It ought not to be assumed that "historical explanation" purports to nullify or to invalidate short-term analysis. Quite the contrary, in fact, since it is the purpose of historical sociology to adumbrate as much as possible the conditions under which particular short-term processes in social structure take on their characteristic shape. Put another way, historical treatment of social structure ought to be an ordinal presentation of relevant sociological data, the continuum being one of time rather than of space. It may be difficult indeed to defend an analysis of contemporary social structure in the Caribbean which rests primarily on a simple description of social conditions under slavery. But it is quite another matter to give as full and as detailed a description as possible of the total social structure of a Caribbean society at an earlier period, in order to make clear the circumstances under which such a society acquired one form rather than another. Admittedly, the historian who would reconstruct and interpret the social organization of the slaves of Jamaica in 1820, say, must struggle with spotty, poorly reported, and often

¹³See Frazier, E. Franklin. *The Negro Family in the United States*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1939; Herskovits, Melville J. *The Myth of the Negro Past*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1941; Herskovits, Melville J. "The Negro in Bahia, Brazil: A Problem in Method," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 3, pp. 394-402; Frazier, E. Franklin, "The Negro in Bahia, Brazil: A Problem in Method," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 7, pp. 465-478.

¹⁴Murdock, George Peter. "Changing Emphases in Social Structure," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 11, 1955, p. 362.

unverifiable data. But this does not invalidate the task, so much as suggest its difficulty.

Several recent advances in the study of contemporary social structure in the Caribbean and elsewhere suggest ways that the historical study of Caribbean social structure might be enhanced. These comments do not pretend to examine these advances exhaustively, but simply to make note of the possibilities. Gough, for instance, has recently approached anew the problem of defining marriage, and uses for her analysis her own provocative materials on the Nayars of India. The Nayars are perhaps of particular interest to students of Caribbean social organization since they are probably the outstanding case of a society lacking the nuclear family as defined by Murdock and others. Gough, however, is not interested in this so much as in the question of marriage itself. Her review of the data leads her to conclude that the Nayars indeed did have marriage, but it served solely to legitimize offspring. Her concluding definition of marriage reads:

Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more persons, which provides that a child born to a woman under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, is accorded full birth-status rights common to normal members of his society or social stratum.¹⁵

Gough admits some peoples may lack marriage by this definition:

There may yet turn out to be whole societies — or more probably whole social strata — in which children acquire no birth-status rights except through their mother, by the simple fact of birth. It is possible for example that some slave populations do not have marriage in this sense of the term.¹⁶

It is not necessary unqualifiedly to accept Gough's definition in order to see the usefulness of testing it against historical data on Caribbean societies. M. G. Smith, in a paper dealing with St. Vincent and Jamaica social structure about 1820, presents data which are relevant:

As property, slaves were prohibited from forming legal relationships of marriage which would interfere with and restrict their owner's property rights . . . slaves lacked any generally accepted mode of establishing permanent mating relationships outside of the legally recognised marriage, among themselves. . . .

As a consequence . . . mating of slaves was typically unstable. . . . But their offspring were not regarded as either legitimate or illegitimate; the children of a slave woman were the lawful property of her owner, who could alienate them at will. The legitimacy-illegitimacy dichotomy only applied to persons born free, and was never applied to slaves, as it was meaningless in that context. If, therefore, after Emancipation for various reasons the majority of the slaves and their descendants continued to mate in unstable associations lacking legal recognition, the "illegitimate" status of the children had no significance among them. [Here] . . . another contemporary West Indian problem is elucidated by reference to historical conditions of social structure.¹⁷

Certainly it would seem that St. Vincent and Jamaican slave sub-societies lacked marriage. But it is not proved that they lacked it as defined by Gough, only that they lacked it according to the formal legal definition. Smith indicates that there was "Absence of any formal procedure for establishing unions, except for the house-building and feast on a girl's first mating, [and this] was paralleled by the informality with which these unions were dissolved." But

¹⁵ Gough, Kathleen. "The Nayars and the Definition of Marriage," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 89, 1959, p. 32.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁷ Smith, M. G. "Social Structure in the British Caribbean about 1820," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4. University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1953, pp. 55-79.

even this may not answer the question entirely. There is clear need for a distinction between a jural definition of marriage and a sub-societal definition of marriage, in case the latter is present and the former is not. To judge by contemporary Caribbean societies, in some instances legal (or sacramental) marriage may be almost absent; and yet there are clear distinctions affecting children and their prerogatives, based on the different patterns of mating and residence which hold within a particular group. That alternate modes of mating and residence may be jurally equivalent from the point of view of the larger society does not mean that they are necessarily equivalent from the point of view of those who practise them. It is quite conceivable that the same differentiation may have been true in the slave groups of certain Caribbean societies. In this connection, one wonders what may have been the special significance of a girl's first mating, to which Smith refers, such that it occasioned a house-building and feast. Nor is the "informality" with which such unions may have been dissolved adequate evidence that there were no distinctions made as between different sorts of union, which might affect the status of children. The practice of tearing in two the "cotta" or headcloth of the wife on dissolving a union, common in Jamaica under slavery, is described without reference to whether this was a standard event in the case of all such dissolutions. It appears to have symbolized the rupture of a union which the slaves themselves acknowledged as such, in any case.¹⁸

A very relevant consideration in seeking historical clarification for questions about domestic group, marriage, and the legitimization of children has to do with matters of residence. The organization of the slave plantation was such that, in general, slaves lived in a nucleated section of the grounds, in houses usually built by their own labour. What is known of the internal organization of household groups is very slight. But the significance of even minor clues in this connection is highlighted by the recent treatment of household organization which Fortes provides.¹⁹ In this formulation, the household, the family, and the "matricentral cell" are distinguished conceptually. The child is seen as passing through at least four differentiated stages in growth, each having particular sociological attributes. The distinction Fortes makes between the matricentral cell and the household is more than a distinction between different orders of social unit, and more, too, than a distinction between temporal phases in the cycle of a domestic group. It is more than a distinction between different orders of social unit because in fact the household membership may be no more than the matricentral cell. In such cases the utility of the distinction lies in the different sociological concomitants which follow from the unit being defined in terms of itself, or being defined in relationship to other units. It is, further, more than a distinction between different temporal phases in the cycle of a domestic group because in fact

¹⁸Mintz, Sidney W. "The Jamaican Internal Marketing Pattern," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1955, pp. 94-103.

¹⁹Fortes, Meyer. "Introduction," in Goody, Jack (ed.) *The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups*, Cambridge Papers in Social Anthropology No. 1, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1958, pp. 1-14.

some matricentral cells may be social units *sui generis*, rather than stages in the development of some statistically dominant sequence of domestic group development.

In Fortes' scheme, the relationship between the matricentral cell and the household is dramatized at the point when the infant leaves its mother's lap and enters physically into the larger household setting (which will usually include the yard in rural Caribbean communities). The infant explores this wider environment through means of its mother, its siblings, or some other older person, probably female in most instances. In Fortes' reckoning, the child is at this point intermediate in its position in the society; it is no longer a mere appendage to its mother, yet it has not yet brought into action the jural attributes consonant with the third stage of its growth. In the third stage, the child enters the wider society existent beyond the confines of the household; and in the final, fourth stage, it takes on the prerogatives of adult status.

It is the third stage which is of most concern here, for it is at the onset of this stage that some individual, expectably male and either *pater* or *in loco patris*, conveys the child to that network of social statuses marked by what Fortes has labeled "jural" regulations. That is, it is assumed that at this point the matricentral cell — and the household, if it consists solely of the matricentral cell — can no longer serve all of the sociological needs of the growing child. The anthropological literature is replete with illustrations of the ways this process of introduction is realized: by father, by maternal uncle, by senior male of the lineage, etc. However, the Caribbean area, historically and to this day, provides examples of social situations in which no male figure of this sort is present. Whatever jural prerogatives the child may have must be invoked by other means, or through some other person or persons.

Data on these matters are not so plentiful as one might suppose, given the growing body of excellent analyses of Caribbean social structure. For the slavery epoch in Caribbean history, we know practically nothing of this process. But an attempt to explore the possibilities can be made all the same. Though we cannot describe with precision the household composition of slave villages on plantations, we know that some houses in such villages contained two adults of opposite sex living in locally (i.e., subculturally) acknowledged and approved union with their children. Historical research may establish that households of this sort are sociologically distinguishable from other domestic groups containing matricentral cells, or single women, or pairs or groups of men, or — possibly — apparently polygynous males and their several consorts. As we have seen, there is further evidence that slave women living in first union with sole male slaves had their unions signalized and acknowledged ritually by the local slave community. It is possible therefore to argue that at least one kind of household group — formally equivalent to a nuclear family — was distinguishable from other groupings in the slavery setting. Such distinctions are much clearer in the Spanish (e.g., Cuba and Puerto Rico) and perhaps French (e.g., Saint Domingue) colonies, where sacramental marriage

for slaves was permitted, and sometimes even encouraged. But emphasis here does not belong primarily with the presence or absence of validation of unions by the larger society. It matters rather whether the slaves themselves distinguished between different sorts of social settings within which childbearing could occur, and delineated the distinction by behaviour.

On the British West Indian plantations, predial slaves were usually formed into gangs or work squads. The third such squad consisted of the aged and infirm and of the very young. Probably the age at which children were moved from the third squad to another squad had real sociological significance. This change may have been an important turning point in status and life-cycle as recognized by the slave community, and not just from the point of view of plantation operation. But it remains to be seen whether a careful search of plantation records and historical accounts will establish this.

Recent papers by Greenfield and Solien,²⁰ both appearing in this journal, further suggest the utility of new concepts in the study of Caribbean social structure for historically oriented students. The distinction between household and family, which may prove useful in further study of contemporary settings, plainly has its relevance to historical interpretations as well. Such a distinction, when combined with an analysis of modes of union on the plantation, of residence patterns, and of jural vs. local legitimization of unions and of offspring, could provide new insights on old data.

Finally, attention may be drawn to Adams' recent paper on family organization, in which the author argues strongly for what may be called a "dyadic approach" to questions of social structure.²¹ R. T. Smith, at a much earlier point, and now Adams, make clear that the study of Caribbean social structure must be united with research in other world areas. Comparable material is drawn by both of these authors from mainland Latin America and elsewhere, and rightly so — since the most elegant theoretical advances must come from propositions which are not limited by historical considerations. In Adams' view, the starting point must be one of dual interaction: mother-son, mother-daughter, sibling-sibling, father-son, father-daughter, and so on. Such minimal pairs of analysis would permit the widest range of comparison; they are further very useful as research tools since they hold in abeyance the whole concept of "the family", the use of which has often hampered progress in the study of Caribbean social structure. A re-examination of historical materials on the islands may reveal much more than has previously been noted concerning dyadic ties, either within domestic groupings of wider scope, or in the simple matricentral cell of mother-child.

There is no assurance that any of these suggestions will prove themselves, given the scanty and uneven descriptions historical sources generally provide.

²⁰Greenfield, Sidney. "Socio-Economic Factors and Family Form," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1961, pp. 78-85; Solien, Nancie L. "Household and Family in the Caribbean," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1, University College of the West Indies, Jamaica, W.I., 1960, pp. 101-106.

²¹Adams, Richard N. "An Inquiry into the Nature of the Family," in Dole, Gertrude E., and Carneiro, Robert L., eds. *Essays in the Science of Culture*, Thos. Y. Crowell Co., New York, 1960, pp. 30-49.

The
stud
so,
mak
anyt
scen

Sid
Profe

G.

Wil
sistan
maica

M.
Unive
the U

Rén
ing in
Mexic

Pete
Vassar

The possibilities ought not to be ignored, however. Just as the systematic study of contemporary social structure in the Caribbean has but barely begun, so, too, thorough and reflective research in social history for the area is simply making its beginnings. Interested students will have to work hard to achieve anything like the success already attained by those analyzing the contemporary scene.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Sidney W. Mintz, co-editor of this number of *Social and Economic Studies*, is Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

G. E. Cumper is Senior Lecturer in Economics, University College of the West Indies.

William Davenport, co-editor of this number of *Social and Economic Studies*, is Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Yale University. His fieldwork in Jamaica was carried out during the months of June to September 1954 and 1955.

M. G. Smith is Professor of Anthropology, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of California, Los Angeles. He was formerly Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University College of the West Indies.

Rémy Bastien is at present Coordinator, Inter-American Program for Advanced Training in Applied Social Sciences, Project 104 of the Organization of American States, in Mexico City, Mexico.

Peter J. Wilson is Instructor, Department of Economics, Sociology and Anthropology, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York.



